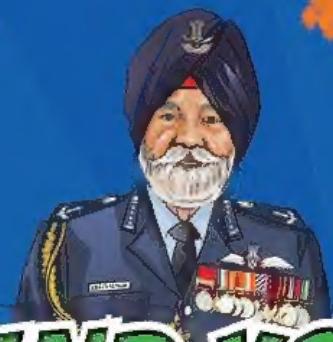




# FIND YOUR CALLING



**DISHA**  
INDIAN AIR FORCE

THE

# BOYRA BOYS

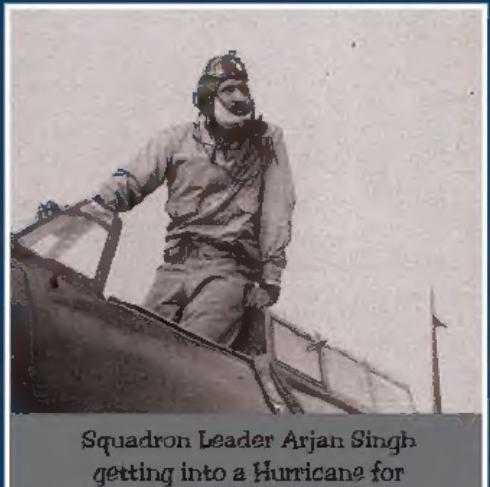


Heroes of the Indian Air Force Volume I

## The Legend in Pictures: Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh, DFC



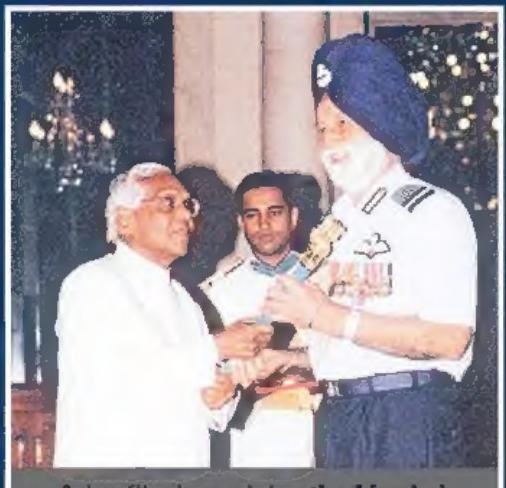
Squadron Leader Arjan Singh with some of his aircrew



Squadron Leader Arjan Singh  
getting into a Hurricane for  
an operational mission

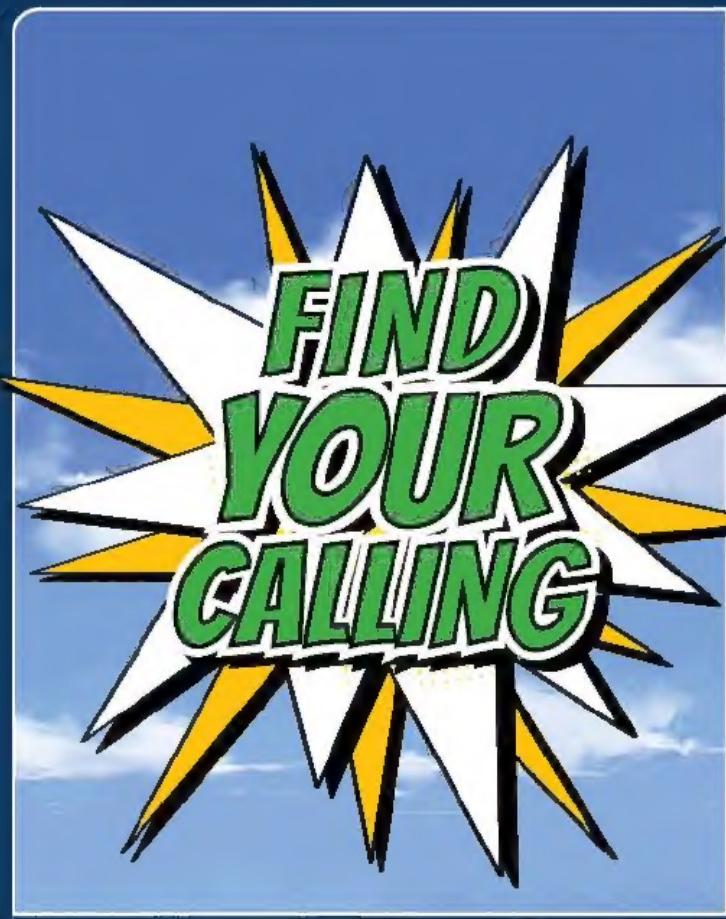


Investiture of Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) to Sqn Ldr Arjan Singh by Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Commander SEAC on the tarmac of besieged Imphal

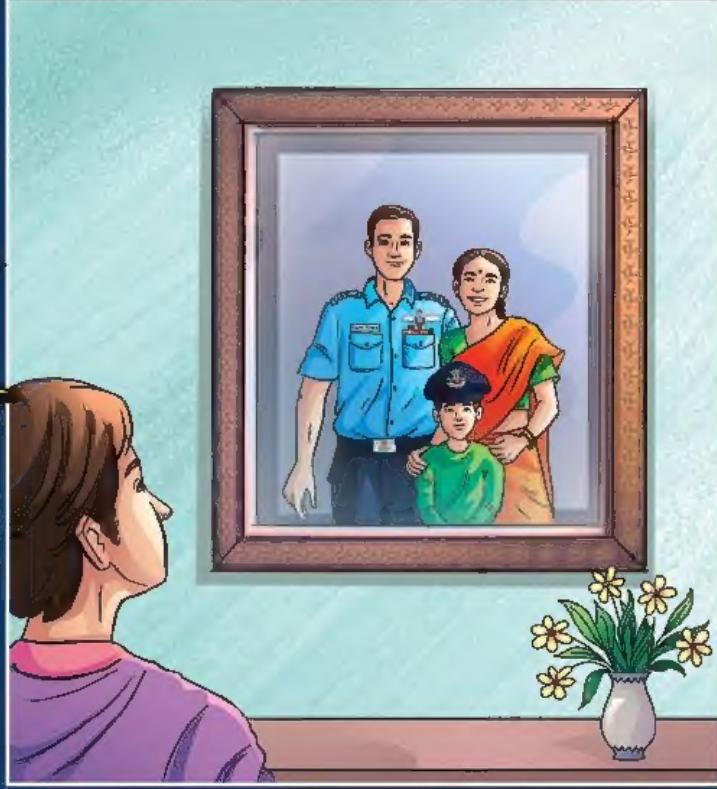


Arjan Singh receiving the Marshal baton by President Shri K.R. Narayanan at the investiture in Darbar Hall of Rashtrapati Bhavan, 2002

**Note to the Reader:** Readers may associate Indian Air Force officers' uniforms with a light blue shirt and blue-grey trousers. Similarly, the overalls used by IAF aircrew today are sage green. It may interest you to know that for many years the IAF uniform was *khakhi*. Similarly, the colour of flying overalls has evolved through time, from *khakhi* to light blue and navy blue, and finally to sage green today. In the early years, aircrew also wore overalls of distinct colours unique to their squadrons. The uniforms/flying overalls depicted in the stories in this book are as applicable to the period.

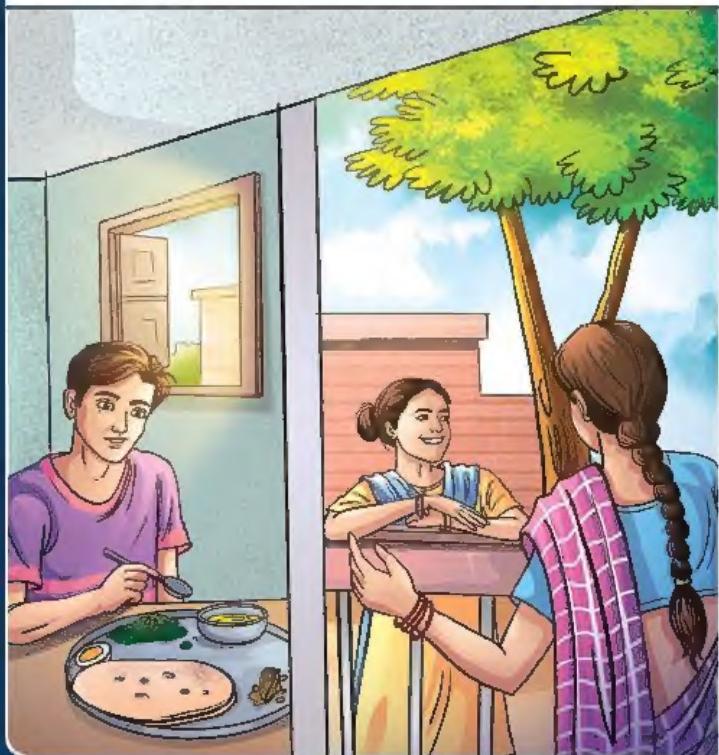


Rahul's father, a respected Indian Air Force officer, was killed in action many years ago during an operation.

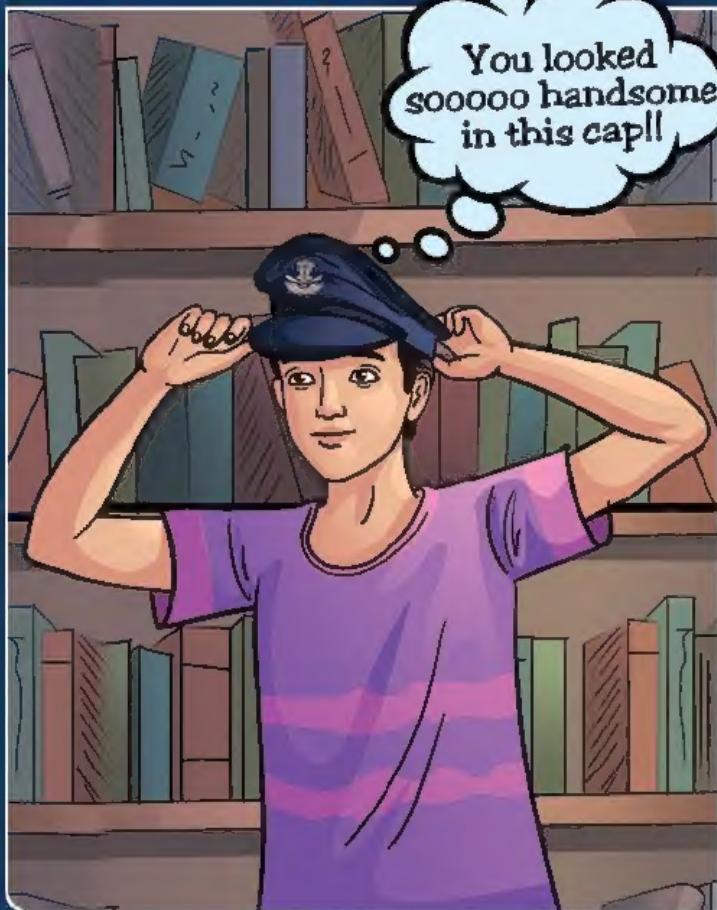
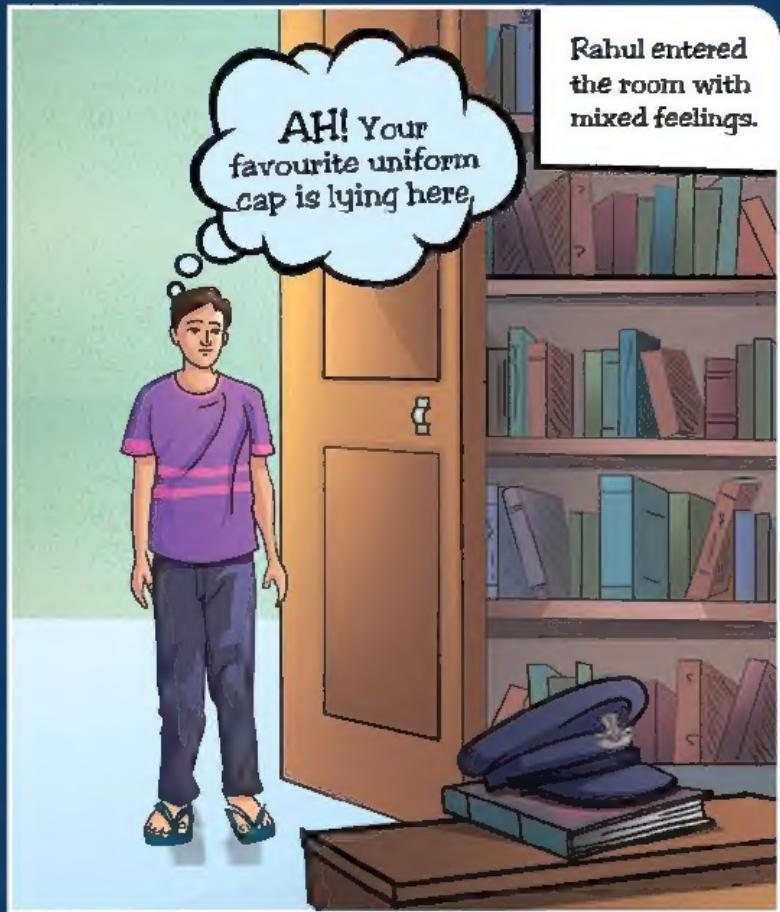
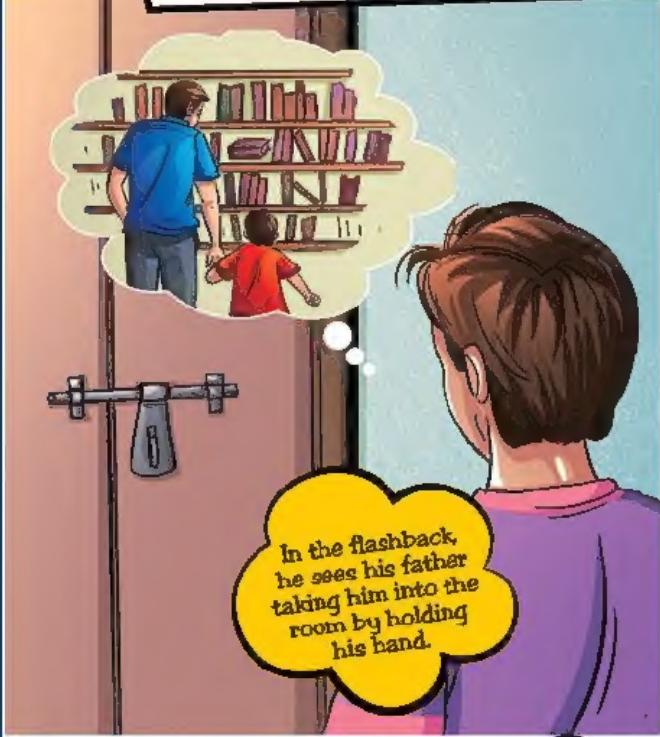


Rahul never understood what cause could be so great that his father willingly sacrificed his life for it. Despite her loss, his mother took immense pride of being associated with the Indian Air Force.

Filled with intrigue and lots of questions in his mind, Rahul went to his father's study - Maybe he might find some answers there.

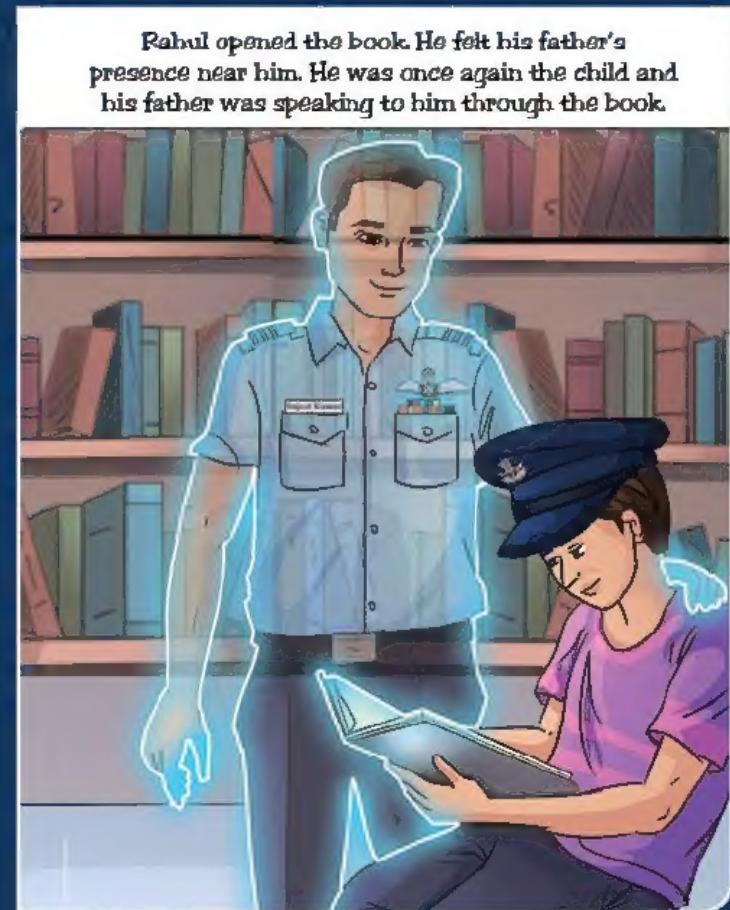
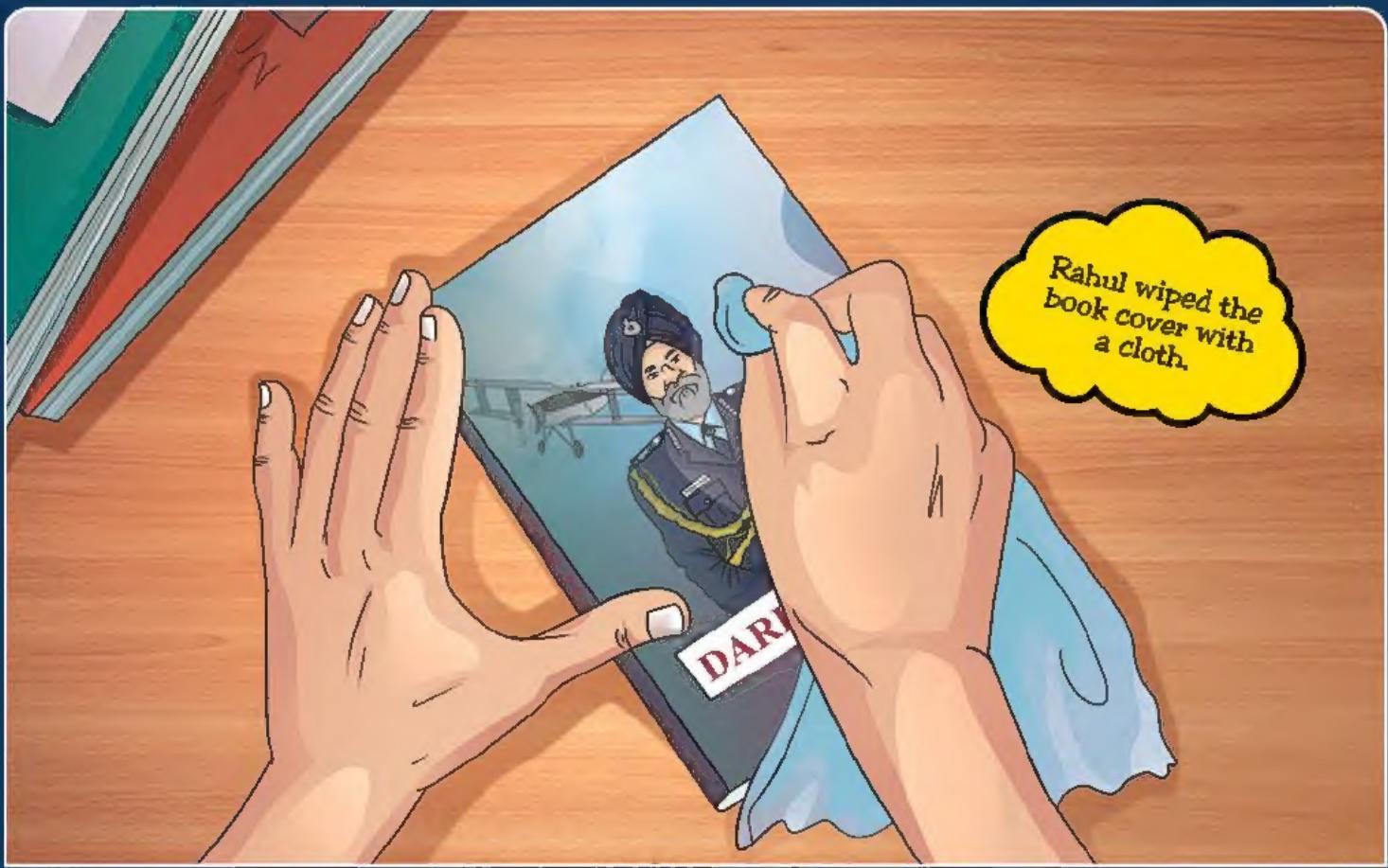


Distant memories came afresh in his mind .. His father would always spend hours in this very study, reading and telling him stories about Indian history.



Like a magnet, Rahul was drawn towards an old bookshelf. A thin book, sandwiched between a dictionary and a novel grabbed his attention.





## CHAPTER 1

# A HERO BORN

15<sup>th</sup> April 1919,  
Lyallpur, Punjab.  
(before partition)  
at the home of  
Lance Daffadar  
Kishen Singh.

His name will be Arjan,  
just like our guru Arjan  
Dev. One day he too  
will make us proud!

Arjan Singh was always inspired by his father. He admired his way of life: the uniform, weapons, and the camaraderie he shared with his brothers in arms.

Arjan Singh was a bright student and a very fine athlete. At school and college, he set swimming records in Punjab and at the National level.

Bauji, I dream of flying and want to join the Air Force. Grant me your blessings.

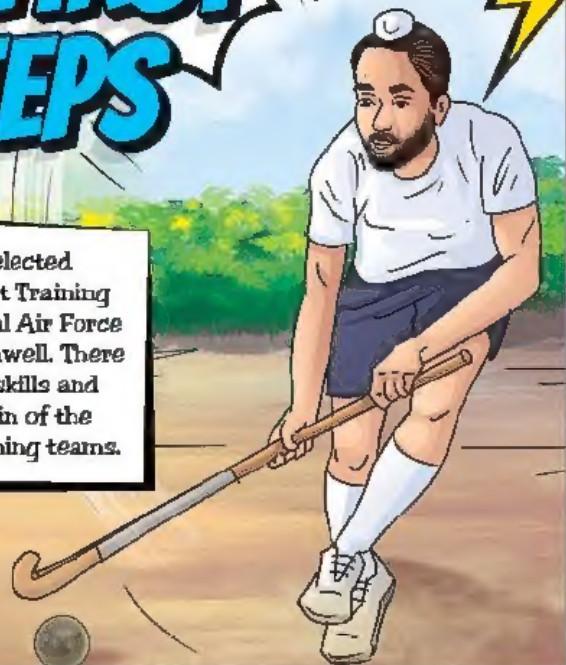
I am proud of you, puttar. May the blessings of Waheguru be always with you!

## CHAPTER 2 THE FIRST STEPS

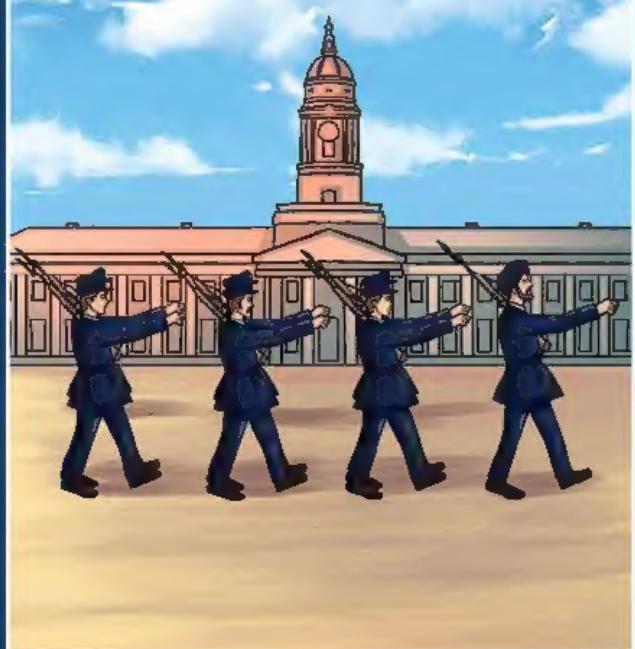
Victory is ours!!  
Winning is the  
only option.  
**YEAHHH!!!!**

Arjan Singh was selected for the Empire Pilot Training Course at the Royal Air Force (RAF) College, Cranwell. There he showcased his skills and became vice-captain of the hockey and swimming teams.

This was during the pre-independence time.



Arjan Singh passed out from the RAF College Cranwell in December 1939 as a Pilot Officer. History was in the making..



One day, you'll add countless stories of valour to your logbook.

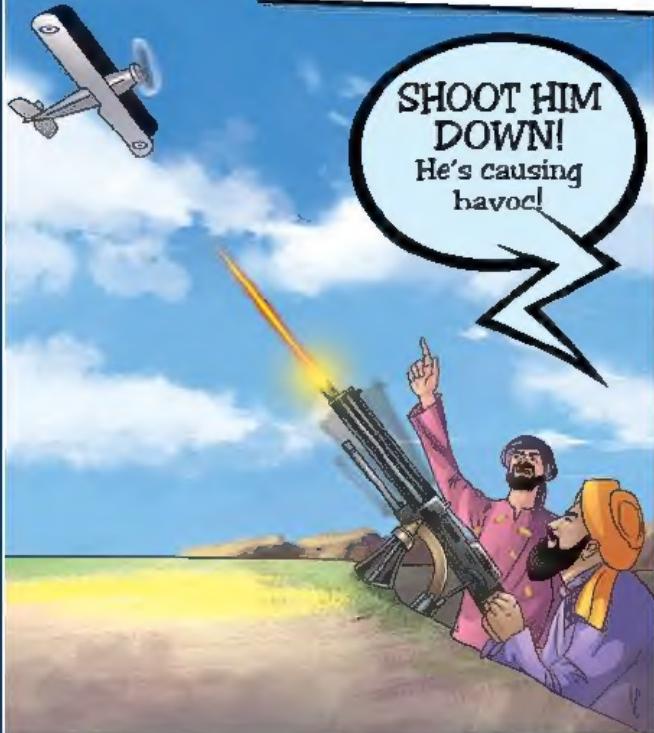
Roger sir,  
I won't let  
you down.

Pilot Officer Arjan Singh was immediately posted to the North Western Frontier Province and flew operations against the Pathan tribal forces.

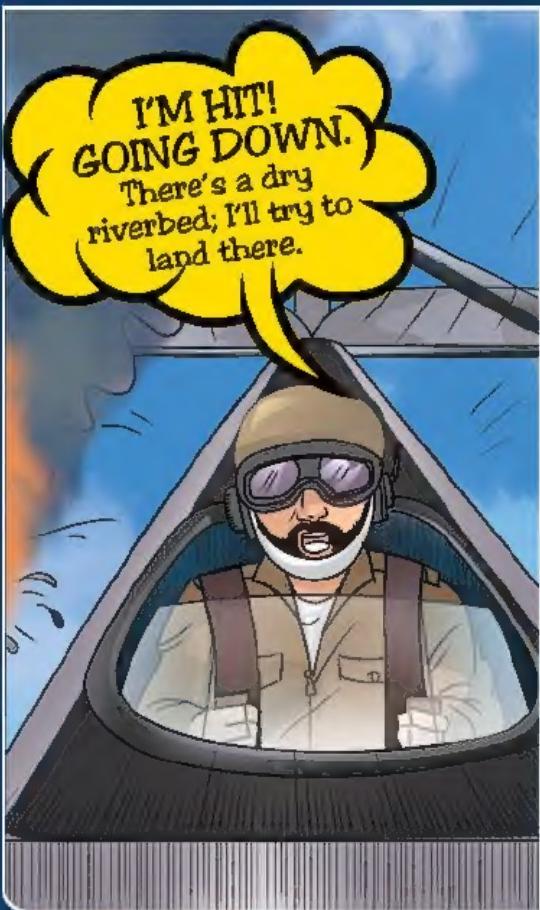
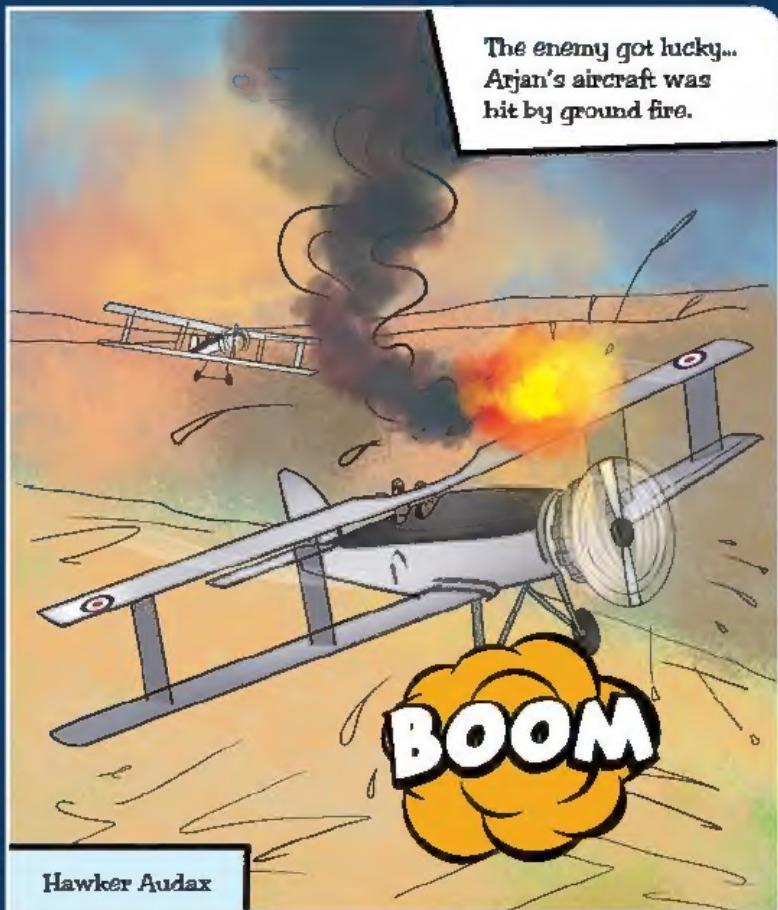
Westland Wapiti  
Biplanes



The battles were fierce, pushing each combatant to their limits. Arjan Singh instilled fear in the hearts of the enemy.

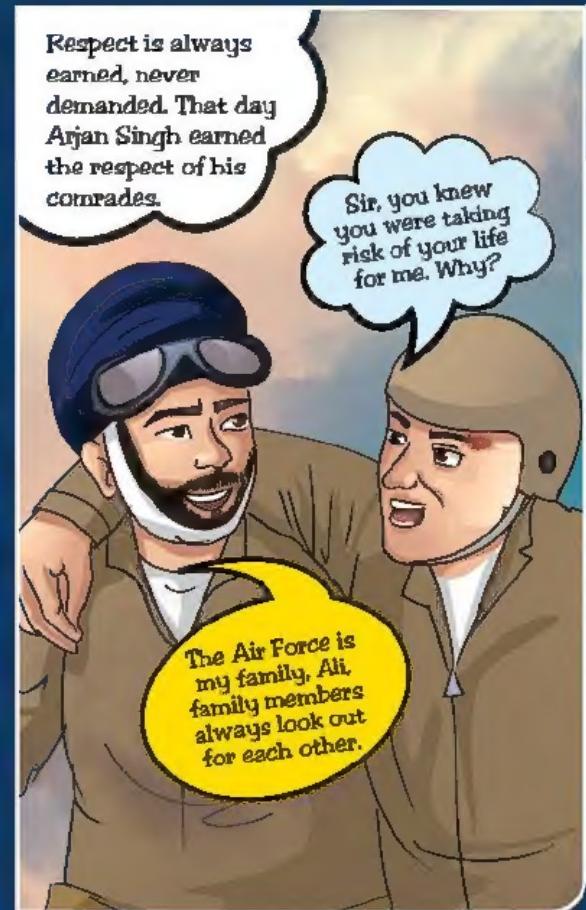
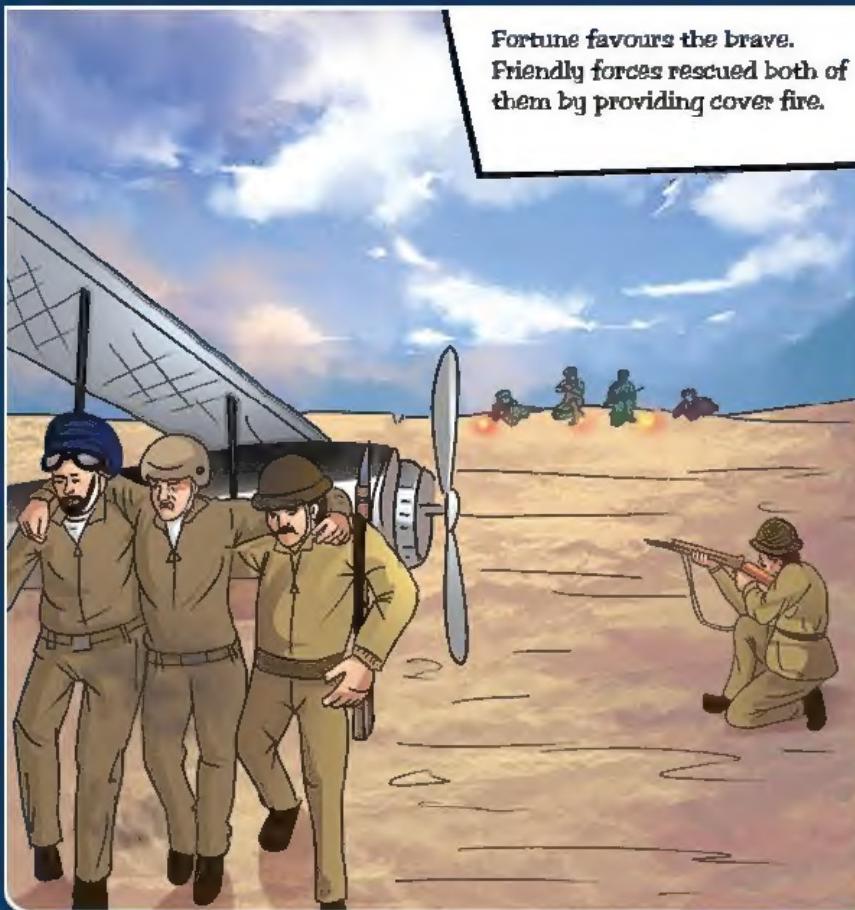


The enemy got lucky... Arjan's aircraft was hit by ground fire.



Arjan Singh skillfully landed on a dry riverbed and leapt out of the burning aircraft. Bullets whizzed by as the enemy tried hard to capture him.



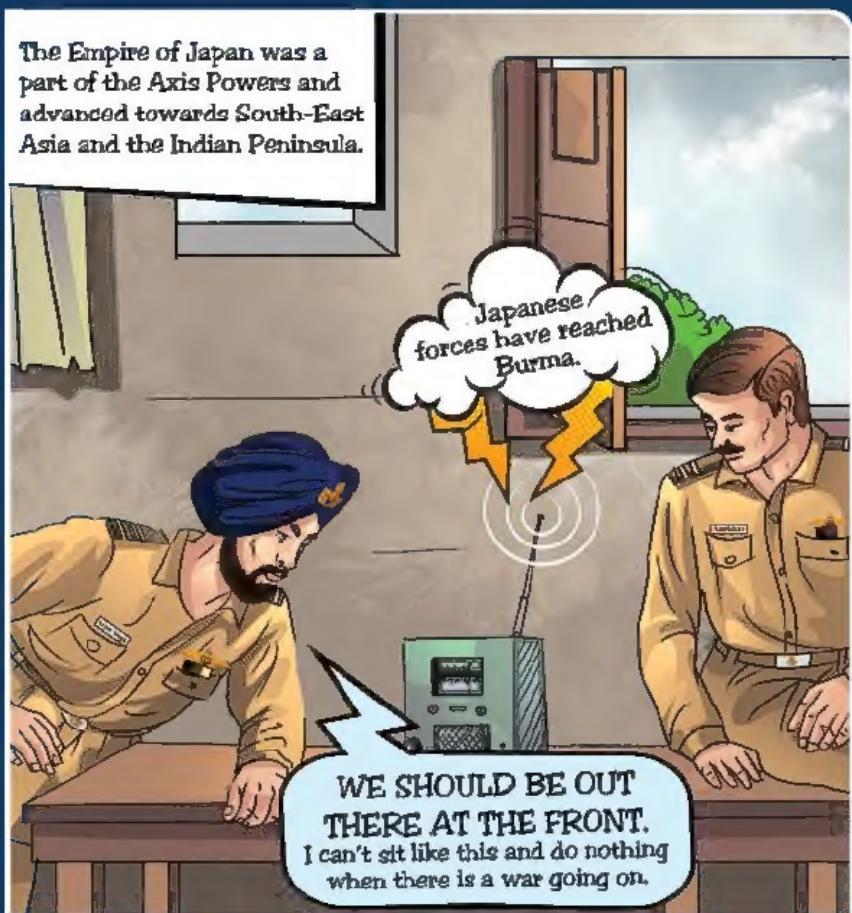


## CHAPTER 3 **FEAR THE FIERCE**

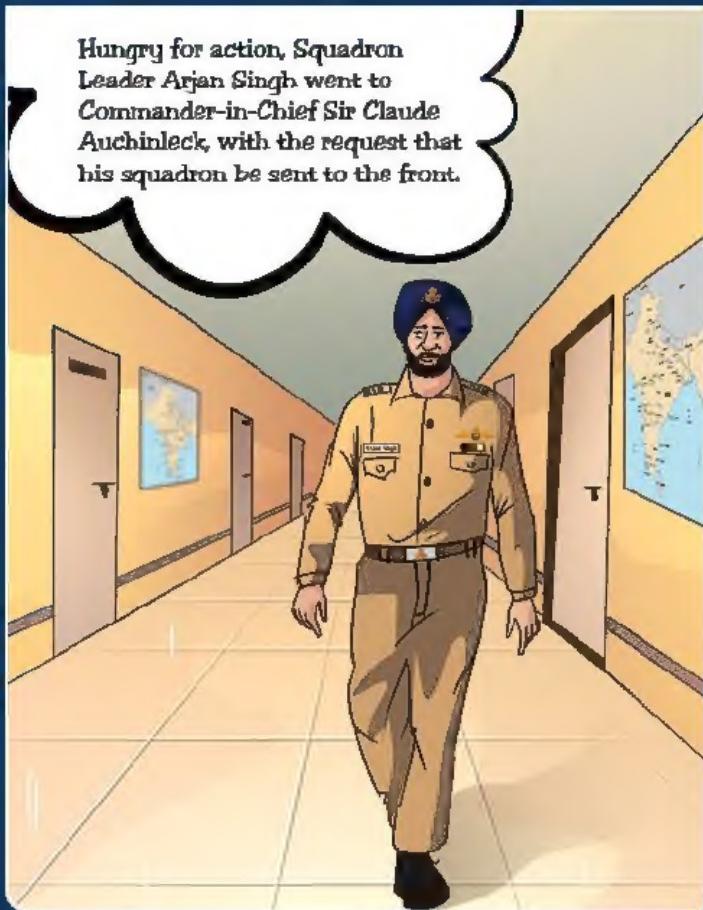


On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939, Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler invaded Poland that marked the beginning of the World War II.

The Empire of Japan was a part of the Axis Powers and advanced towards South-East Asia and the Indian Peninsula.



Hungry for action, Squadron Leader Arjan Singh went to Commander-in-Chief Sir Claude Auchinleck, with the request that his squadron be sent to the front.

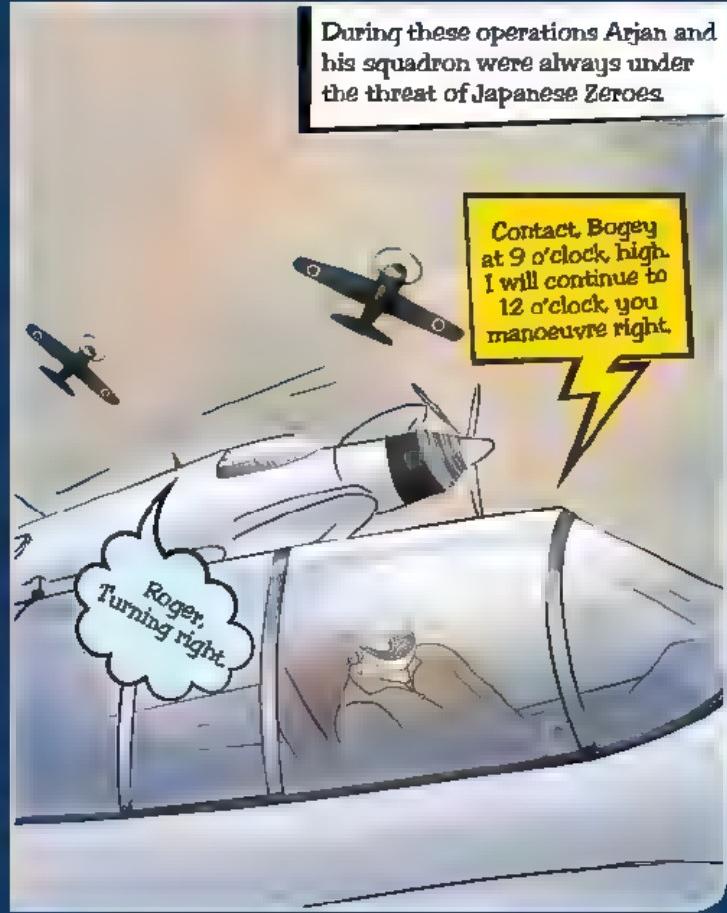


In the office of Commander-in-Chief Sir Claude Auchinleck





During the Burma campaign at the Arakan front, Arjan's Squadron flew to Imphal, faced the Japanese forces head-on and helped allied forces advance to Rangoon.





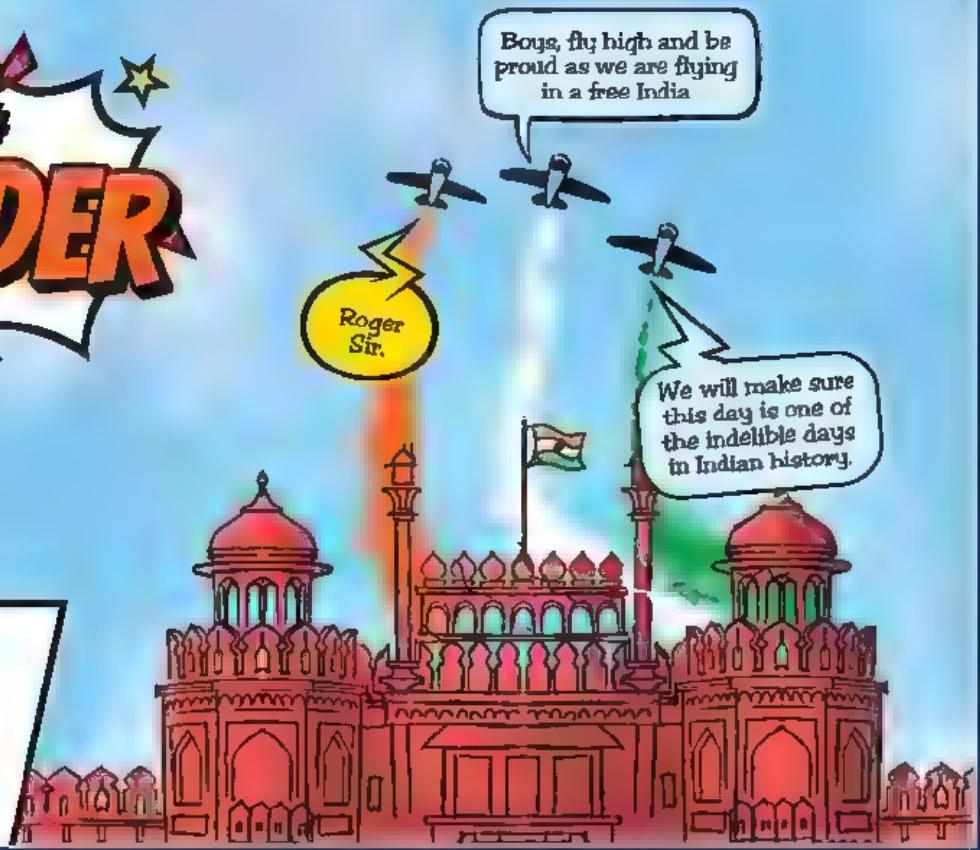
Despite heavy opposition from the Japanese fighters, Arjan's Squadron carried out numerous attacks on enemy vehicles, gun positions, and troops.

For his heroic actions Squadron Leader Arjan Singh was awarded the most coveted medal special to the Air Force - the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) by Admiral Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Southeast Asia.

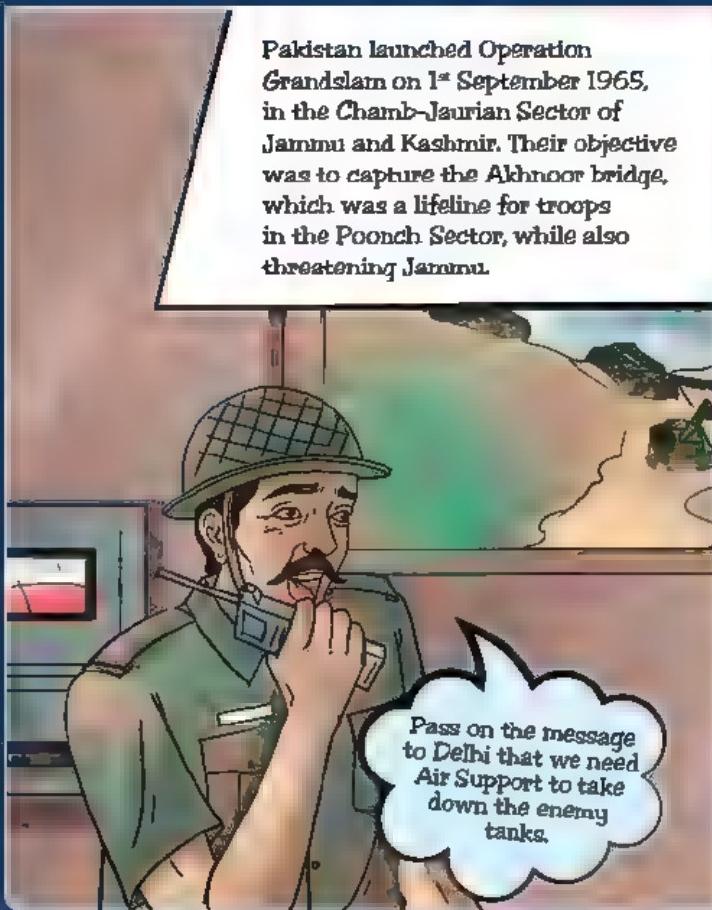


## CHAPTER 4 **THE LEADER**

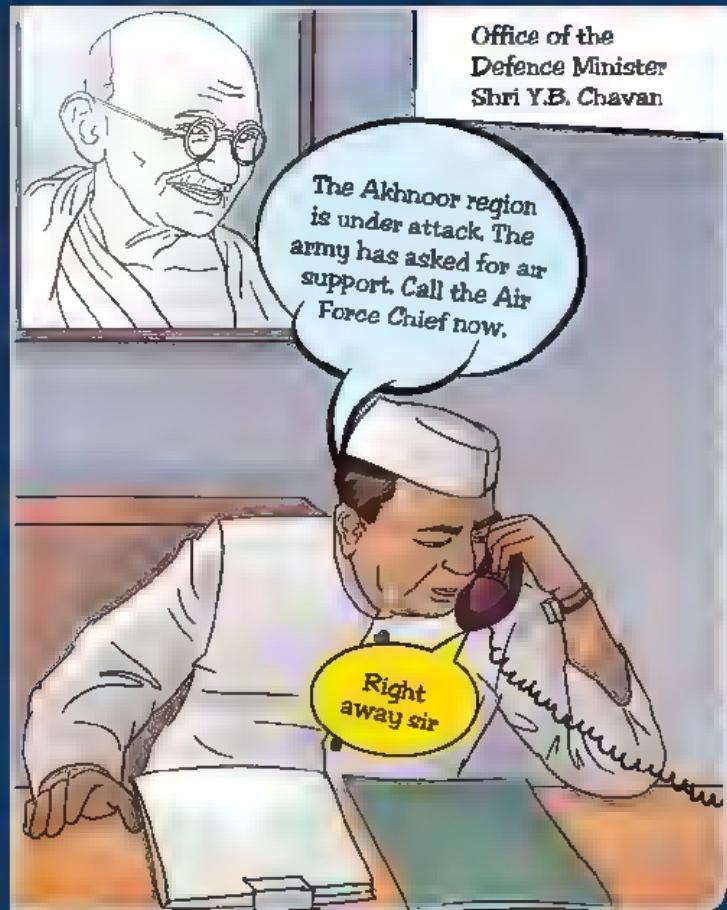
On 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947, India gained independence. Arjan Singh got the honour to lead the first flypast over the Red Fort.

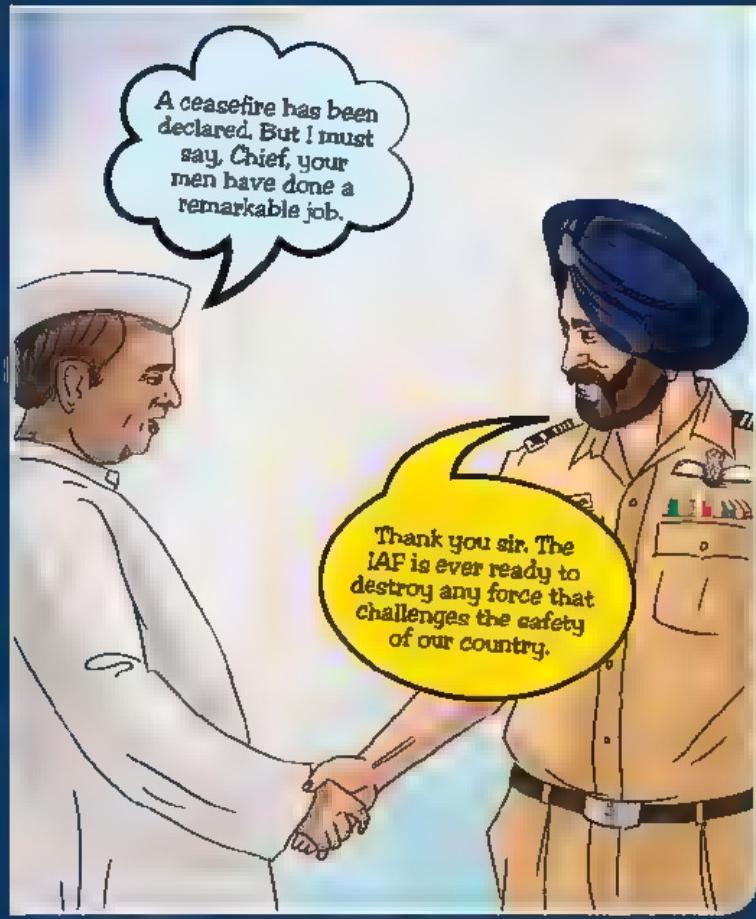
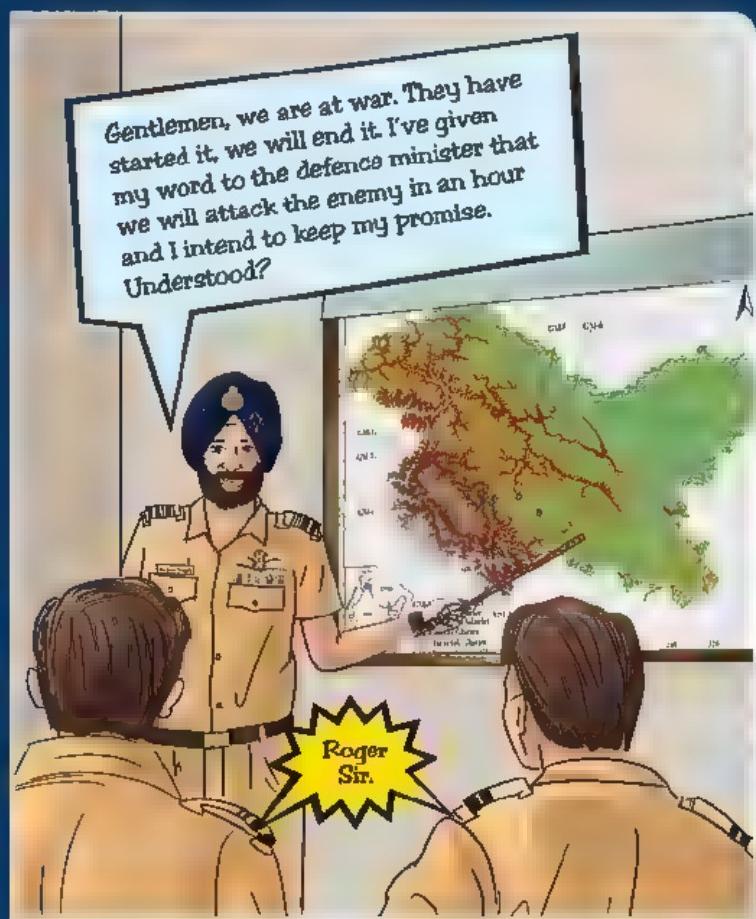


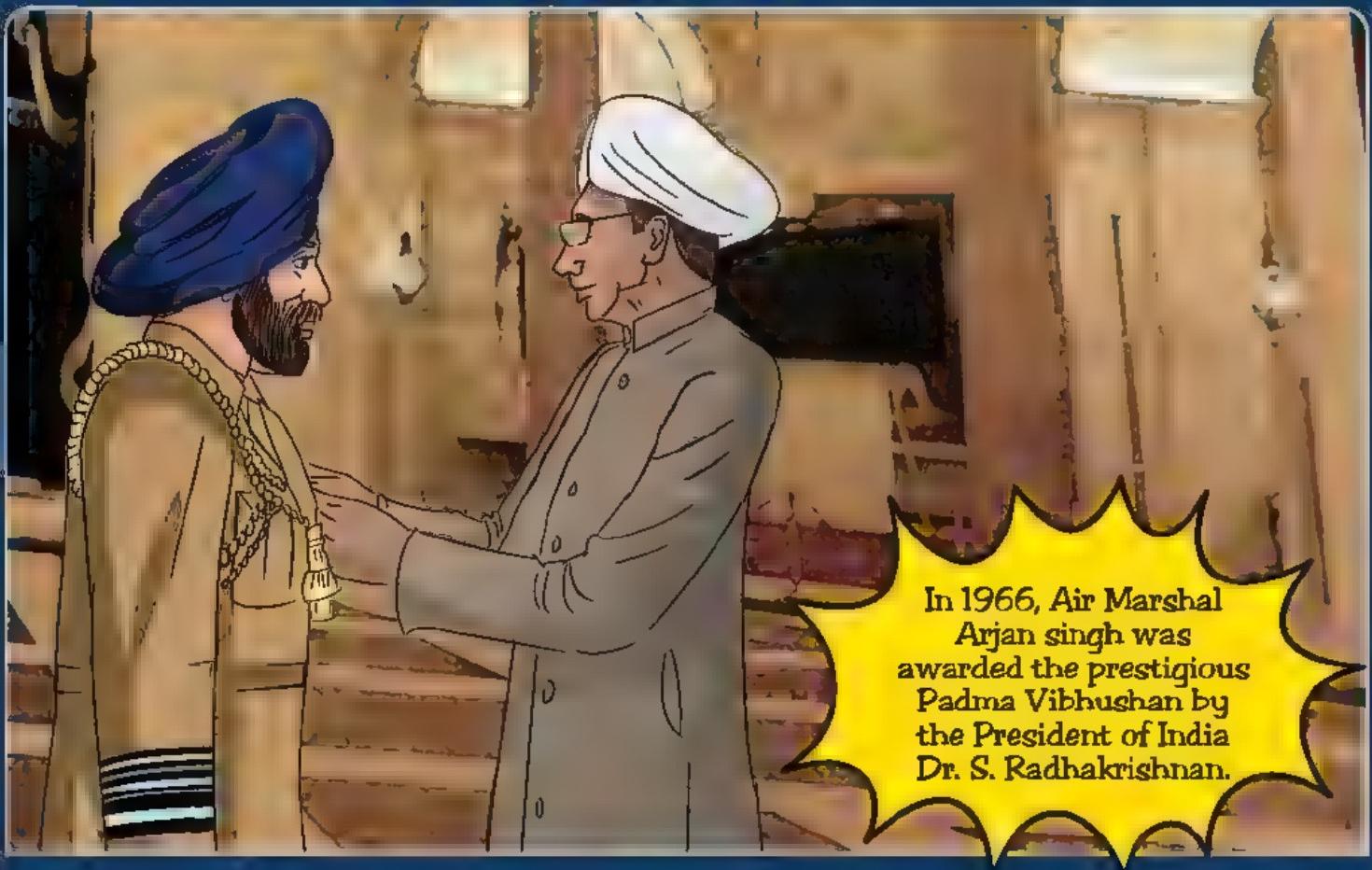
Pakistan launched Operation Grand Slam on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1965, in the Chamb-Jaurian Sector of Jammu and Kashmir. Their objective was to capture the Akhnoor bridge, which was a lifeline for troops in the Poonch Sector, while also threatening Jammu.



Office of the Defence Minister  
Shri Y.B. Chavan





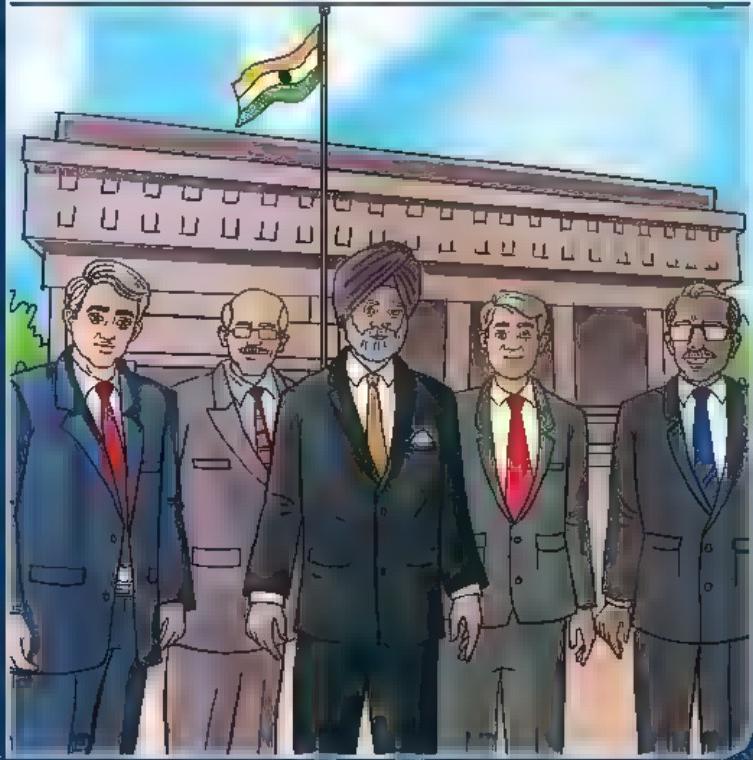


In 1966, Air Marshal Arjan Singh was awarded the prestigious Padma Vibhushan by the President of India Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.



In 1969, Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh retired as the Chief of Air Staff.

Post retirement he served as the Ambassador to Switzerland and was India's High Commissioner to Kenya and Nairobi. He also held significant posts such as Lt. Governor of Delhi and Chairman of IIT Delhi, among others.





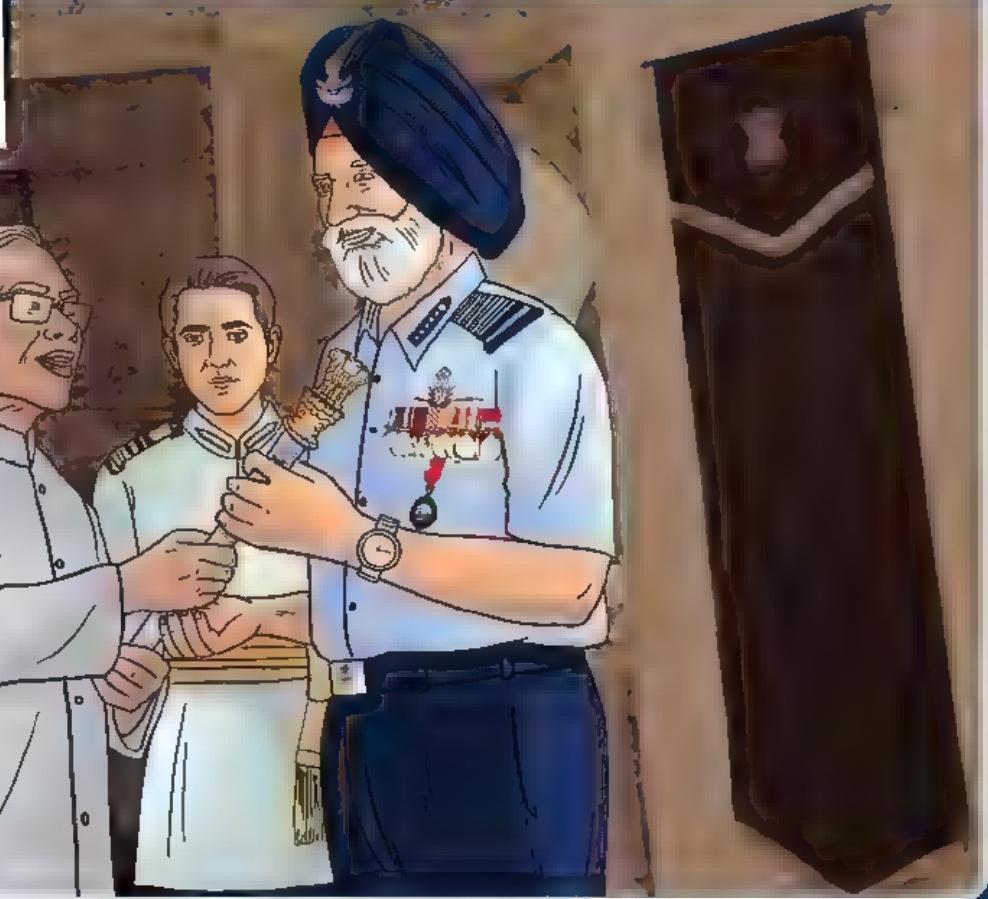
For utmost dedication to the nation, the Government of India decided to confer the rank of Marshal of the Air Force to Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh, DFC (Retired).



Sir, It is my honour to inform you that the PMO has recommended you for promotion to the rank of Marshal of the Air Force. As per the letter in my hand you will be conferred with this rank on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

Thank you for this great news officer!

On 26<sup>th</sup> January 2002, Arjan Singh became the first Marshal of the Air Force.

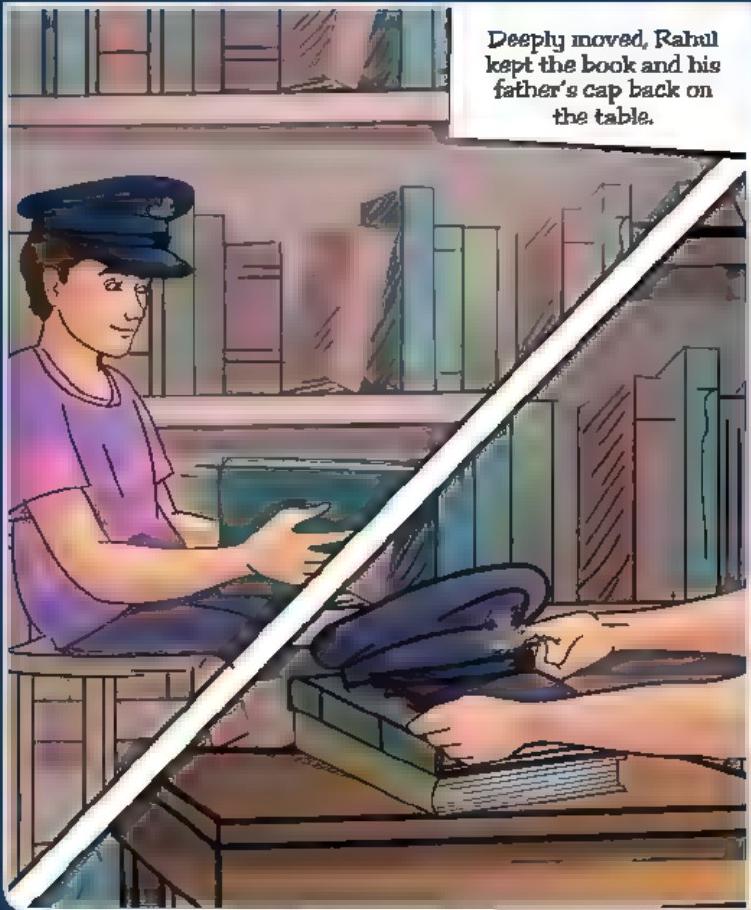


Thank you, gentlemen. I am deeply moved by your love and respect. As I have said before, the Air Force is my family. As the Marshal of the Air Force, I will never retire from my duty and shall serve the nation till my last breath.



His entire life was a testament to "Money and Heart should always be given away". He founded the Air Force Association and gave away most of his wealth for it.

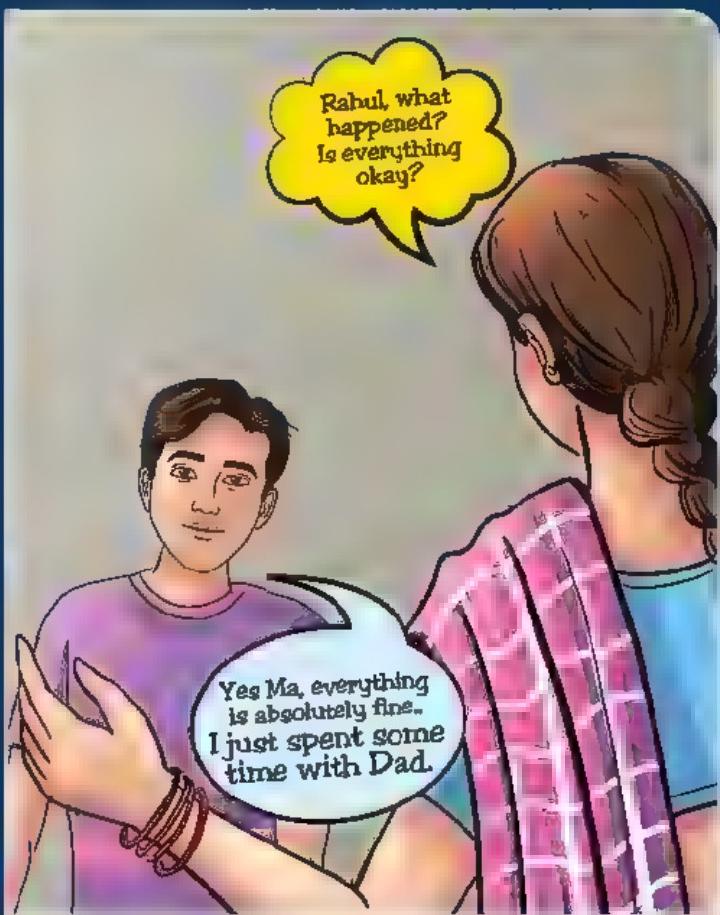
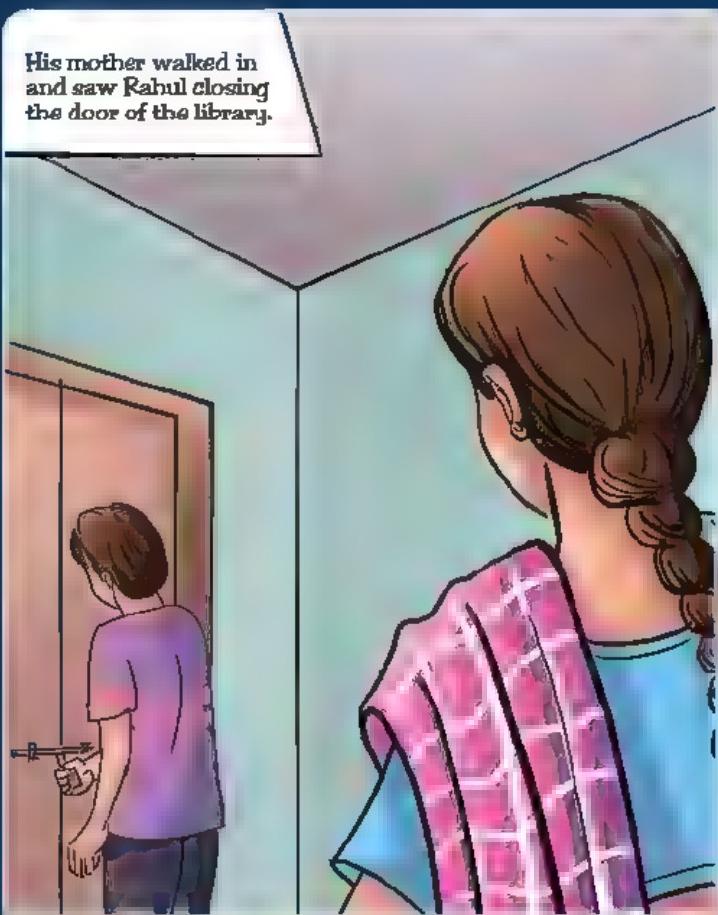
Deeply moved, Rahul kept the book and his father's cap back on the table.



Rahul now understood, why his father was utterly devoted to the Indian Air Force. He felt an enormous sense of clarity and confidence.



His mother walked in and saw Rahul closing the door of the library.



Rahul looked at the mirror. He saw himself in the image of his father.



# RAHUL FOUND HIS CALLING



# BECOME A GUARDIAN OF THE SKIES

## CHOOSE HOW YOU CAN SERVE IN THE INDIAN AIR FORCE

### FLYING BRANCH

An aspirant can join the Flying Branch of the Indian Air Force by clearing one of the following entry:

#### National Defence Academy (NDA)

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 16½ to 19½ years as on the date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Permanent Commission (PC). **Educational Qualifications:** 10+2 with Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics (Students appearing in 12<sup>th</sup> standard can also apply), subject to fulfillment of the qualification as on the date of commencement of training.

#### Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT)

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20-24 years as on date of commencement of training (Additional 2 years relaxation is available for Commercial Pilot Licence holders). **Type of Commission:** Short Service Commission (SSC). **Educational Qualifications:** Minimum 50% marks each in Mathematics and Physics at 10+2 level AND Graduation with minimum 3 years degree course in any discipline from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent OR BE/B. Tech. degree (Four years course) from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent OR Candidates who have cleared Section A & B examination of Associate Membership of Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent.

#### Combined Defense Services Examination (CDSE)

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20-24 years as on date of commencement of training (Additional 2 years relaxation is available for Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) holders). **Type of Commission:** Permanent Commission (PC). **Educational Qualifications:** Any Graduate/BE/B. Tech. degree holder having passed Physics and Mathematics at 10+2 level. (Students appearing for final year/semester can also apply provided there are no backlog/weeks in papers of previous semester).

#### National Cadet Corps (NCC) Special

NCC Special Entry scheme is a special entry scheme available for those graduates who have a valid NCC Air wing "C" certificate.

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20-24 years as on date of commencement of training (Additional 2 years relaxation is available for Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) holders). **Type of Commission:** Permanent Commission (PC) for Men, Short Service Commission (SSC) for Men and Women. **Educational Qualifications:** Candidates should have mandatorily passed 10+2 with a minimum of 50% marks each in Mathematics and Physics AND Graduation with a minimum 3 years degree course in any discipline from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent OR BE/B. Tech. degree (Four years course) from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent OR Candidates who have cleared Section A & B examinations of Associate Membership of Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent.

### GROUND DUTY (TECHNICAL) BRANCH

#### Aeronautical Engineering (Mechanical & Electronics)

An aspirant can join the Aeronautical Engineering branch of the Indian Air Force through any one of the following entry:

#### National Defence Academy (NDA)

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 16½ to 19½ years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Permanent Commission (PC). **Educational Qualifications:** 10+2 with Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics (Students appearing in 12<sup>th</sup> standard can also apply), subject to fulfillment of the qualification as on the date of commencement of the course.

#### Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT)

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20 to 28 years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Short Service Commission (SSC). **Educational Qualifications:**

#### AERONAUTICAL ENGINEER (ELECTRONICS) AE(L)

Candidates with a minimum of 50% marks each in Physics and Mathematics at 10+2 level and a minimum of four years Graduation/Integrated Post-Graduation qualification in Engineering/Technology from a recognized University OR cleared Section A and B examination of Associate Membership of Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India or Graduate Membership Examination of the Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers by actual studies with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent in the following disciplines:

- (i) Communication Engineering (ii) Computer Engineering/Technology (iii) Computer Engineering & Application (iv) Computer Science and Engineering/Technology (v) Electrical and Computer Engineering (vi) Electrical and Electronics Engineering (vii) Electrical Engineering (viii) Electronics Engineering/Technology (ix) Electronics Science and Engineering (x) Electronics (xi) Electronics and Communication Engineering (xii) Electronics and Computer Science (xiii) Electronics and/or Telecommunication Engineering (xiv) Electronics and/or Telecommunication Engineering (Microwave) (xv) Electronics and Computer Engineering (xvi) Electronics Communication and Instrumentation Engineering (xvii) Electronics Instrument & Control (xviii) Electronics Instrument & Control Engineering (xix) Instrumentation & Control Engineering (xx) Instrument & Control Engineering (xxi) Information Technology (xxii) Electric Power and Machinery Engineering (xxiii) Infotech Engineering (xxiv) Cyber Security.

#### AERONAUTICAL ENGINEER (MECHANICAL) (AE(M))

Candidates with a minimum of 50% marks each in Physics and Mathematics at 10+2 level and a minimum of four years Graduation/Integrated Post-Graduation qualification in Engineering/Technology from a recognized University or cleared Section A and B examination of Associate Membership of Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India by actual studies from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent in the following disciplines: (i) Aerospace Engineering (ii) Aeronautical Engineering (iii) Aircraft Maintenance Engineering (iv) Mechanical Engineering (v) Mechanical Engineering and Automation (vi) Mechanical Engineering (Production) (vii) Mechanical Engineering (Repair and Maintenance) (viii) Mechatronics (ix) Industrial Engineering (x) Manufacturing Engineering (xi) Production and Industrial Engineering.

## GROUND DUTY (NON-TECHNICAL) BRANCH

### Weapon Systems

An aspirant can join the Weapon Systems branch of the Indian Air Force through Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT) entry, as per the details shown below:

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20 to 26 years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Short Service Commission (SSC). **Educational Qualifications:** Candidates should have mandatory passed with a minimum of 50% marks each in Mathematics and Physics at 10+2 level AND Graduation with minimum three years degree course in any discipline from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent OR BE/B. Tech. degree (Four years course) from recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent.

### Administration and Logistics

An aspirant can join the Administration and Logistics Branch of the Indian Air Force through any one of the following:

#### National Defence Academy (NDA)

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 18% to 19% years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Permanent Commission (PC) **Educational Qualifications:** 10+2 with Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics (Students appearing in 12th standard can also apply), subject to fulfilment of the qualification as on the date of commencement of the course.

#### Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT)

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20 to 26 years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Short Service Commission (SSC). **Educational Qualifications:** Passed 10+2 AND Graduate Degree (Min three years degree course) in any discipline from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent or cleared Section A & B examination of Associate Membership of Institution of Engineers (India) or Aeronautical Society of India from a recognized University with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent.

### Meteorology

An aspirant can join the Meteorology Branch of the Indian Air Force through Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT) as per the information mentioned:

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20 to 26 years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Short Service Commission (SSC) **Educational Qualifications:** Passed 10+2 AND B.Sc. with Physics and Mathematics with a minimum of 60% marks or equivalent OR Four years Graduation in Engineering/Technology discipline with minimum of 60% marks or equivalent in the following streams: (i) Communication Engineering (ii) Computer Engineering/Technology (iii) Computer Engineering and Application (iv) Computer Science and Engineering/Technology (v) Electrical and Computer Engineering (vi) Electrical and Electronics Engineering (vii) Electronics Engineering/Technology (viii) Electronics Science and Engineering (ix) Electronics (x) Electronics and Communication Engineering (xi) Electronics and Computer Science (xii) Electronics and/or Telecommunication Engineering (xiii) Electronics and/or Telecommunication Engineering (Microwave) (xiv) Electronics Communication and Instrumentation Engineering (xv) Information Technology (xvi) Mechanical Engineering

### Accounts

An aspirant can join the Accounts Branch of the Indian Air Force through Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT) as per the information mentioned below:

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20 to 26 years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Short Service Commission (SSC) **Educational Qualifications:** Passed 10+2 AND the candidates should have done Graduation in any of the following streams with 60% marks or equivalent from a recognized University: (i) B.Com Degree (minimum three years course), (ii) Bachelor of Business Administration (with specialisation in Finance)/Bachelor of Management Studies (with specialisation in Finance)/Bachelor of Business Studies (with specialisation in Finance), (iii) Qualified CA/CMA/CS/CFA, (iv) LL.B. with specialisation in Finance

### Education

An aspirant can join the Education Branch of the Indian Air Force through Air Force Common Admission Test (AFCAT) as per the information mentioned below:

**Nationality:** Indian **Gender:** Men and Women **Marital Status:** Unmarried **Age Limit:** 20 to 26 years as on date of commencement of training. **Type of Commission:** Short Service Commission (SSC) **Educational Qualifications:** Passed 10+2 AND Post Graduation with 50% marks in any discipline, including Integrated courses offering PG (single degree without permission to exit and lateral entry) and with 60% marks in Graduation in any discipline.

## NOTE

- (1) The engagement period for Flying Branch (Men and Women) SSC Officers is 14 years from the date of Commissioning. (2) The initial tenure for Ground Duty (Technical & Non-Technical) SSC Officers would be for a period of 10 years. An extension of 4 years may granted subject to service requirements, availability of vacancies, willingness, suitability and merit. (3) Grant of Permanent Commission (PC) (at a later date) would be considered subject to service requirements, availability of vacancies, willingness, suitability, merit and as per prevailing policies on the subject. (4) SSC Officers are not entitled for grant of pension.

## SELECTION PROCESS

- (1) The first step is to register online for the written examination. The written examination for NDA and CDSE entry is conducted by UPSC, whereas the examination for the AFCAT entry is conducted by the Indian Air Force. There is no initial written examination for NCC Special entry. (2) All those who appear in the written examination and make it through the stipulated cut-off are called to Air Force Selection Board (AFSB) for testing. (3) Testing at AFSB comprises of: (a) Document Check, (b) Stage-I testing comprising of Officer Intelligence Rating Test (OIR) and Picture Perception and Discussion Test (PPDT). (c) Only Stage-I cleared candidates shall undergo Stage-II, which involves Psychological Test, Group Testing Officer Test and Interview before Board Conference is conducted. (4) After the conference, the result is announced. (5) After the results, selected Flying Branch candidates shall additionally undergo the Computerised Pilot Selection System (CPSS) test. (6) After the AFSB testing, the cleared candidates shall undergo a medical examination at one of the military hospitals/establishments. (7) An All India Merit List is prepared for all AFSB cleared candidates (declared medically fit) based on vacancies. Candidates making it through the All India Merit List are given joining instructions to undergo training at the designated training establishments. (8) Those who successfully complete training are commissioned as an Officer in the Indian Air Force.

# THE BOYRAK BOYS

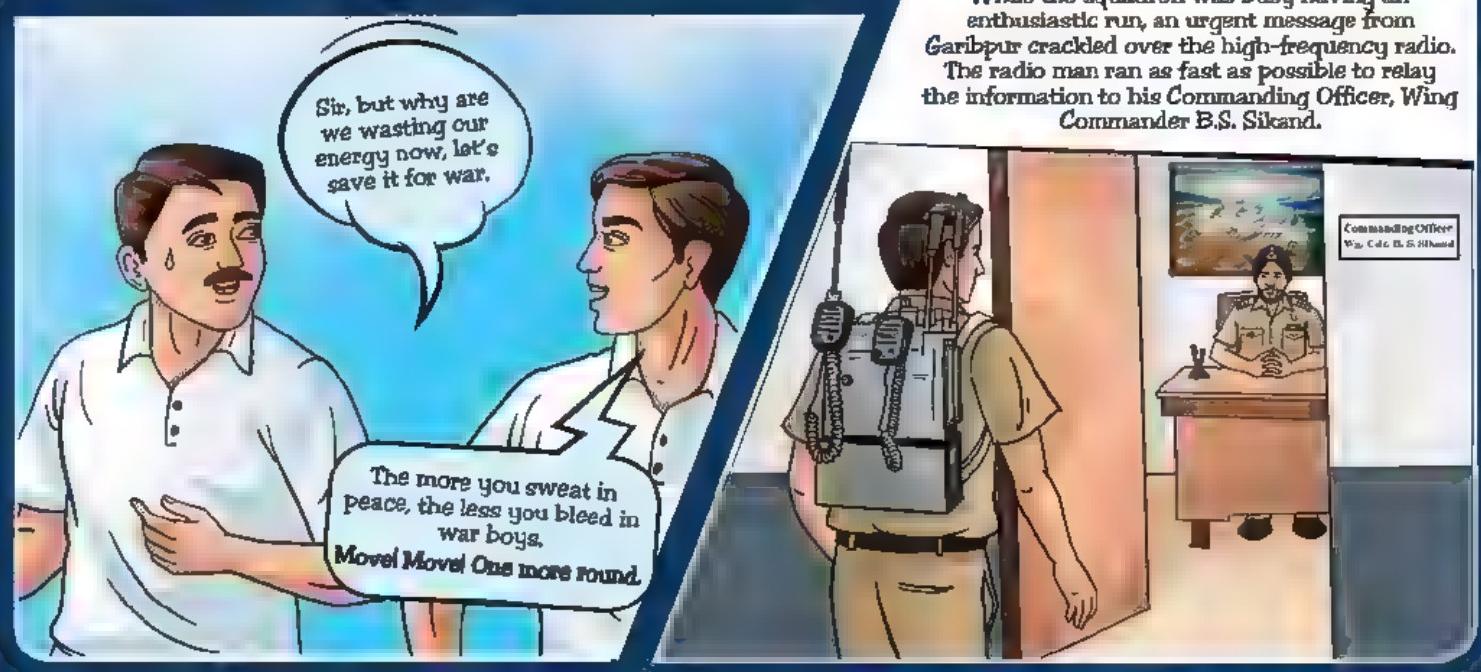


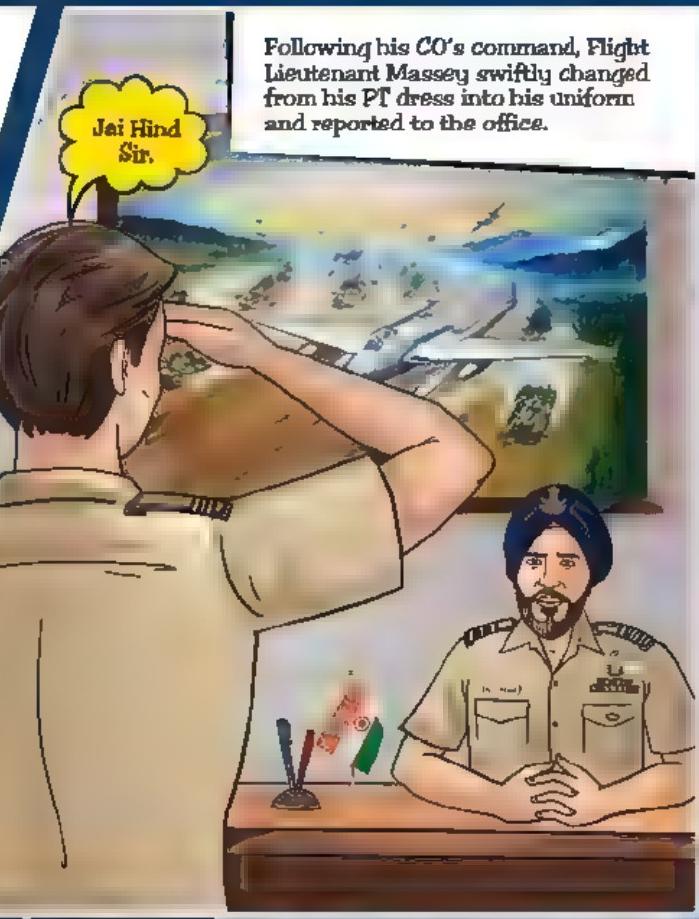
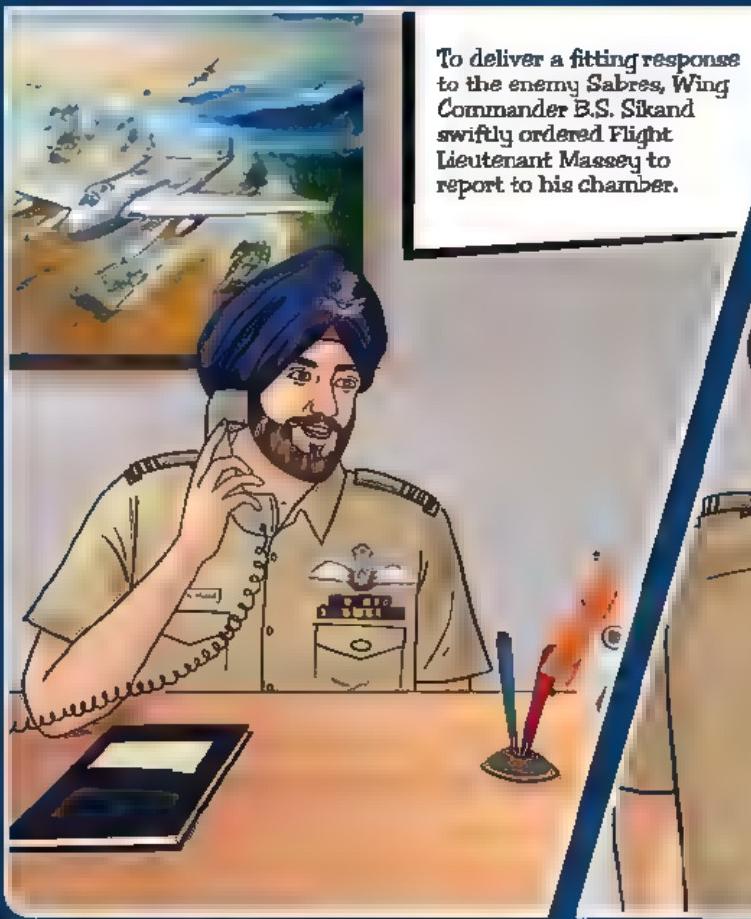
22<sup>nd</sup> November 1971 dawned with a deceptive calm amidst the chaos. At Kalaikunda, all the personnel of 22 Squadron were engaged in their routine PT, just like any other day.

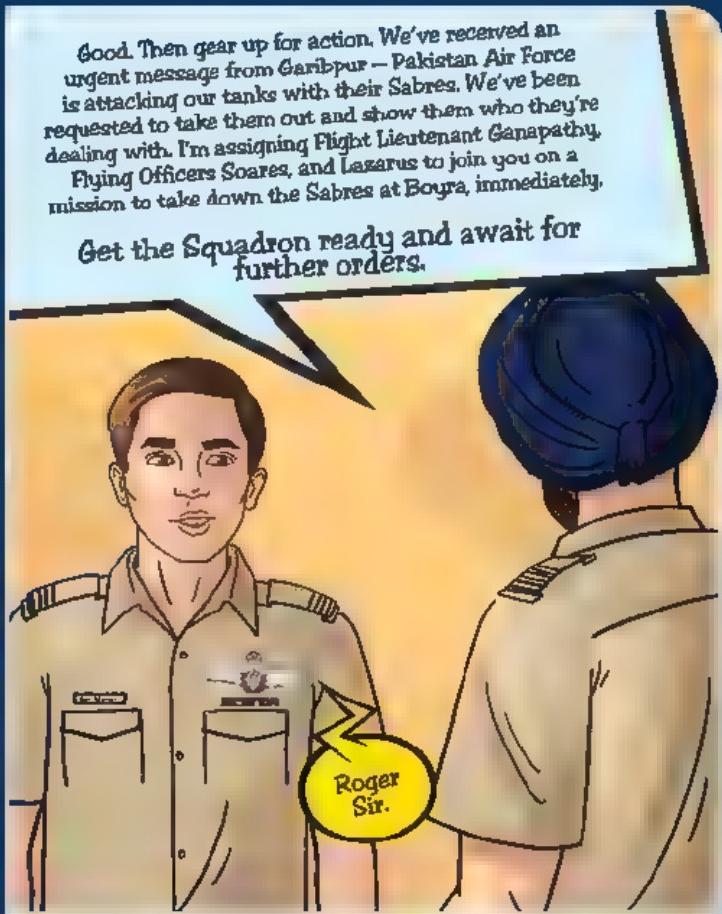


Leading the pack were four fighter pilots: Flight Lieutenant Roy Andrews Massey (Mouse), Flight Lieutenant M A Ganapathy (Gun), Flying Officer Soares (Su), and Flying Officer Donald Lazarus (Don). They were setting an inspiring example, embodying true leadership among their comrades.

While the squadron was busy having an enthusiastic run, an urgent message from Garibpur cracked over the high-frequency radio. The radio man ran as fast as possible to relay the information to his Commanding Officer, Wing Commander B.S. Siland.

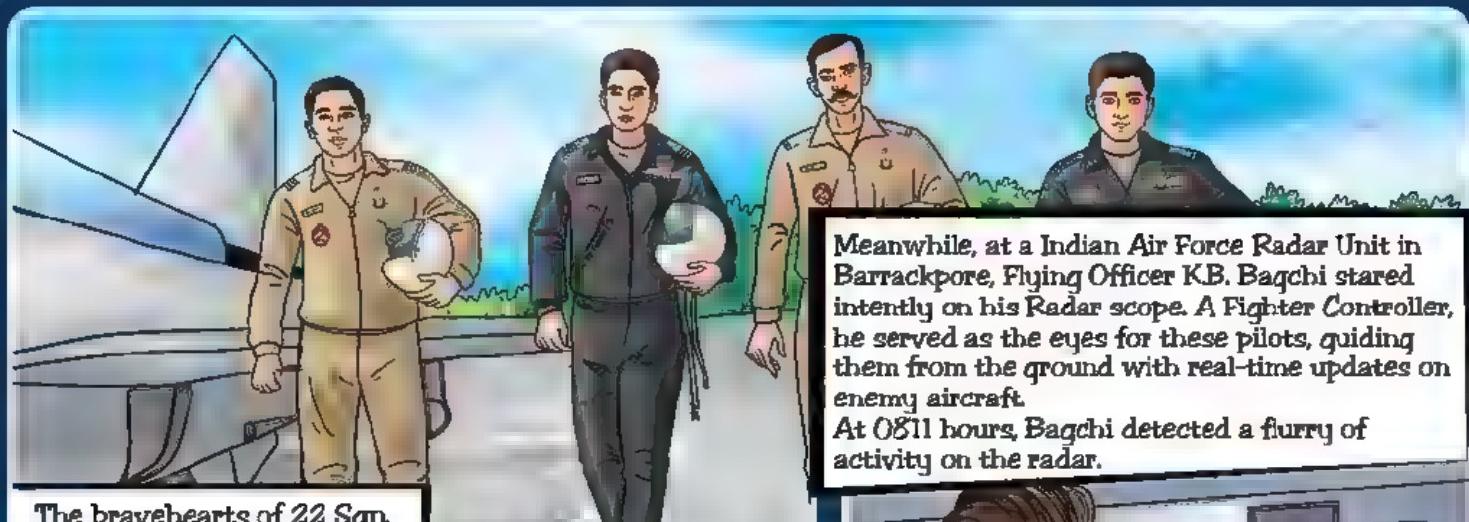






The role of 22 Sqn was to provide Air Defence and Ground Attack in support of Indian Army in the eastern sector. The Sqn was raring for action.





Meanwhile, at a Indian Air Force Radar Unit in Barrackpore, Flying Officer K.B. Bagchi stared intently on his Radar scope. A Fighter Controller, he served as the eyes for these pilots, quiding them from the ground with real-time updates on enemy aircraft.

At 0811 hours, Bagchi detected a flurry of activity on the radar.

The bravehearts of 22 Sqn geared up for battle, and moved to Dum Dum, to be closer to the action.



Despite launching in good time, the mission was unable to neutralise the enemy. Disappointed, they landed back.

At 1028 hours, again an attempt was made, but the Sabres could not be spotted.

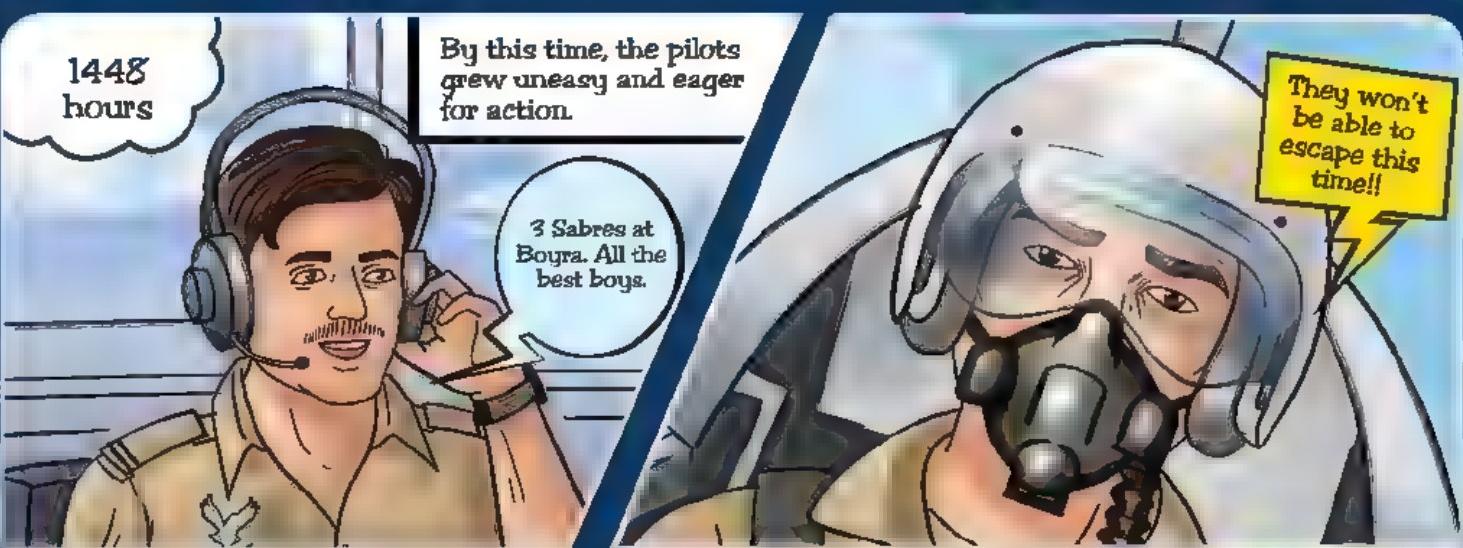


1448 hours

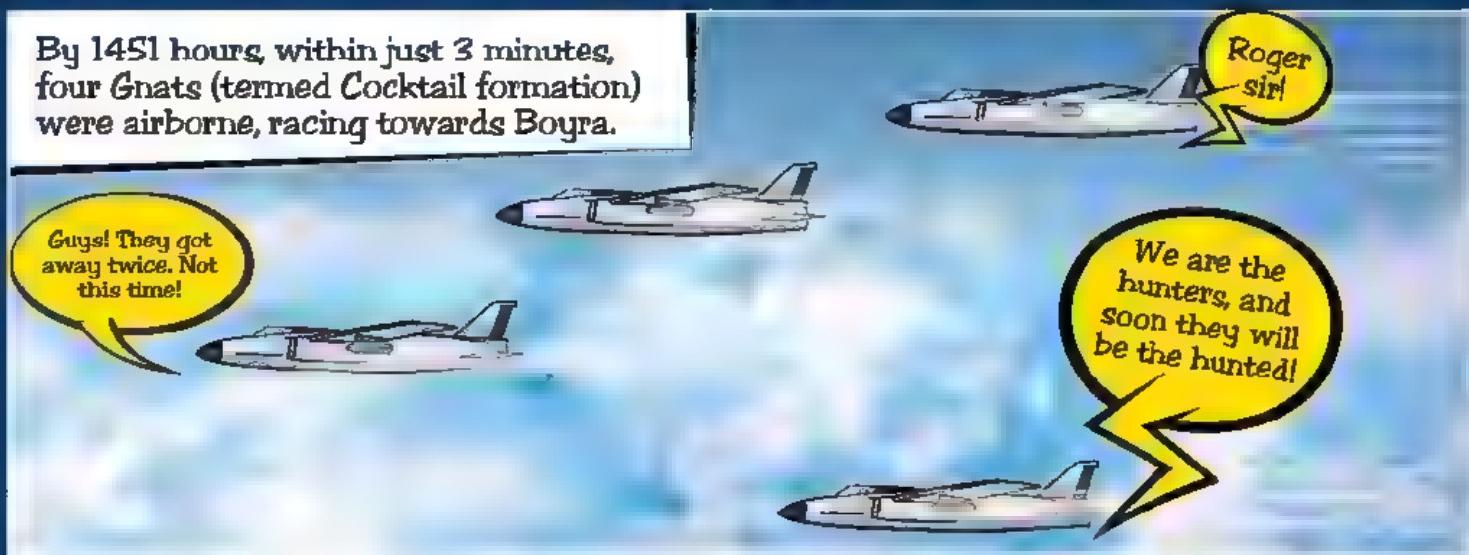
By this time, the pilots grew uneasy and eager for action.

3 Sabres at Boyra. All the best boys.

They won't be able to escape this time!!



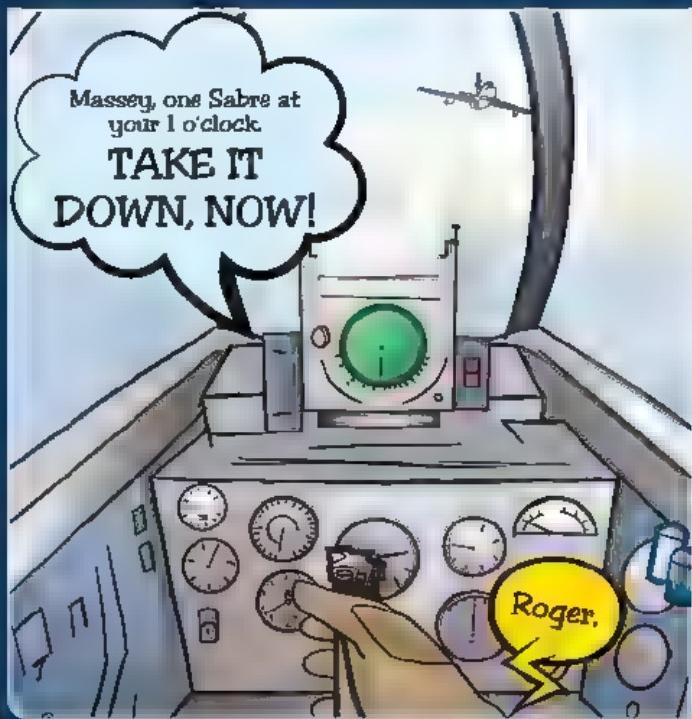
By 1451 hours, within just 3 minutes, four Gnats (termed Cocktail formation) were airborne, racing towards Boyra.

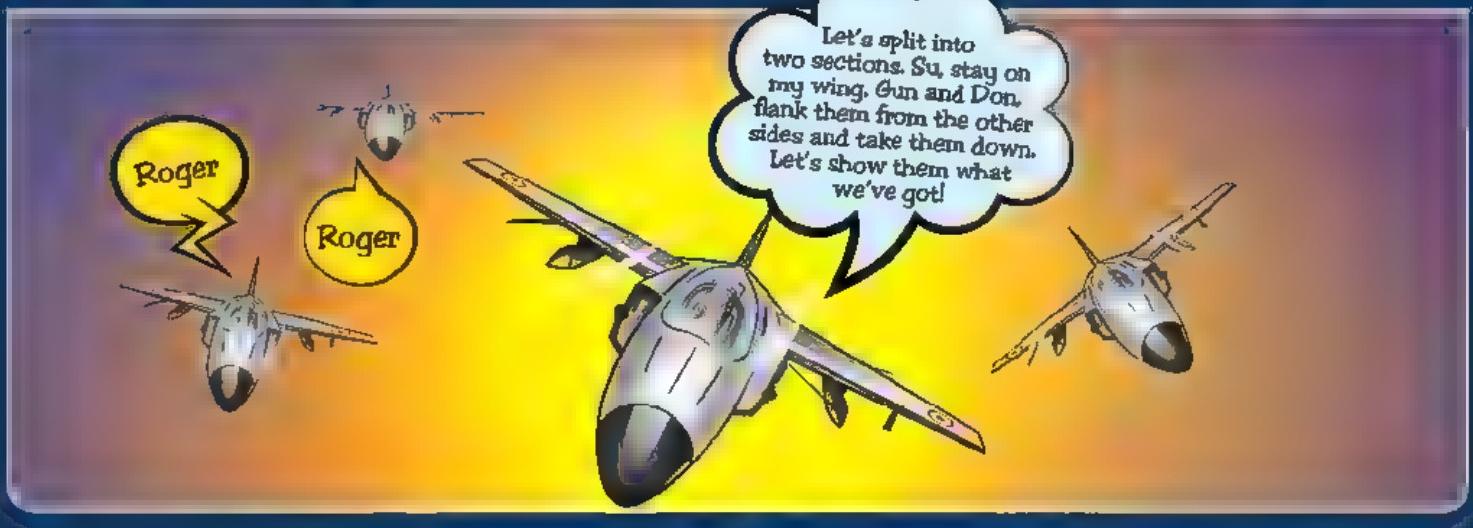
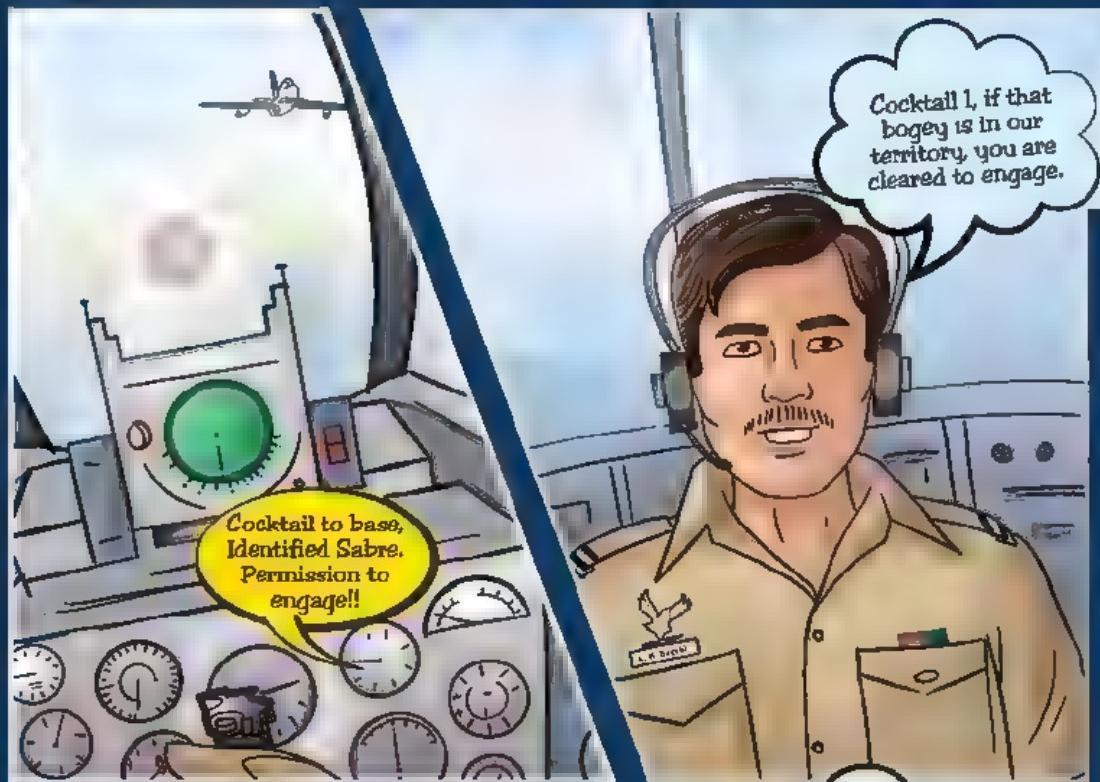
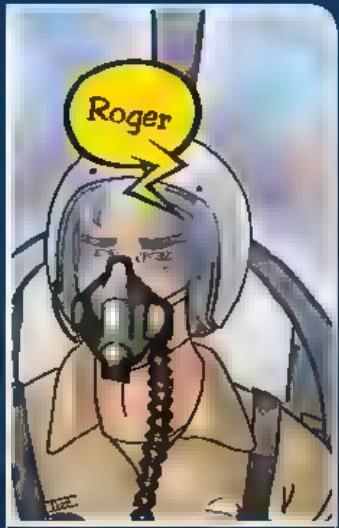


Massey, one Sabre at your 1 o'clock  
**TAKE IT DOWN, NOW!**

Roger.

I see the enemy turning left.  
**STAY ON HIM!**





As they engaged the enemy, the fight took them lower and lower closer to the ground.

There is another bogie, crossing 6 o'clock pulling up fast.

I have him in my sights.  
**LET'S LIGHT HIM UP!**

Gun,  
**TAKE HIM DOWN!**  
Show no mercy

Roger that  
Don, stick with me.

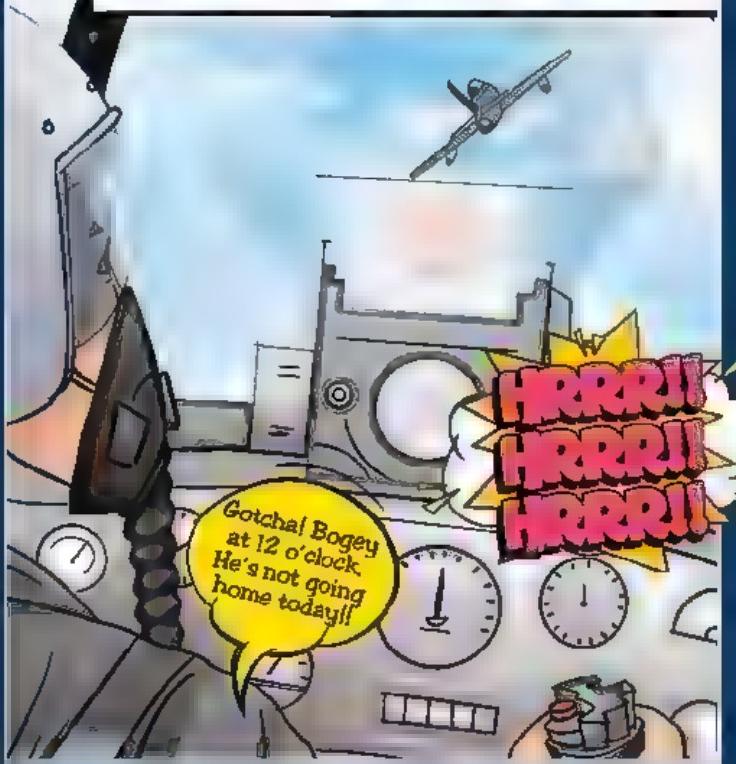
**WE'RE  
TAKING  
THESE GUYS  
DOWN!!**

Roger. I'll stay  
back and check  
your '6'.

Spotting the aggressive assault by the Indian Air Force, the enemy Sabres split into two sections. Out of the three Sabres, two veered off in different directions, trying to save themselves.

They're  
closing in on us!  
**SPLIT UP  
AND  
ENGAGE!**

As the Gnats dived in, two Sabres abandoned their mission. They found themselves trapped in a vulnerable position right in front of Ganapathy and Lazarus.

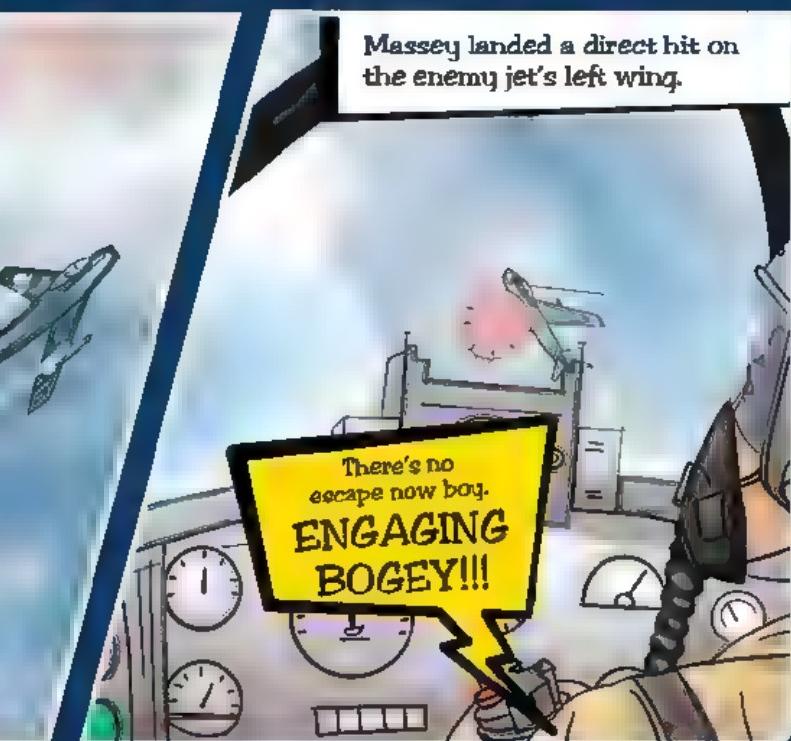


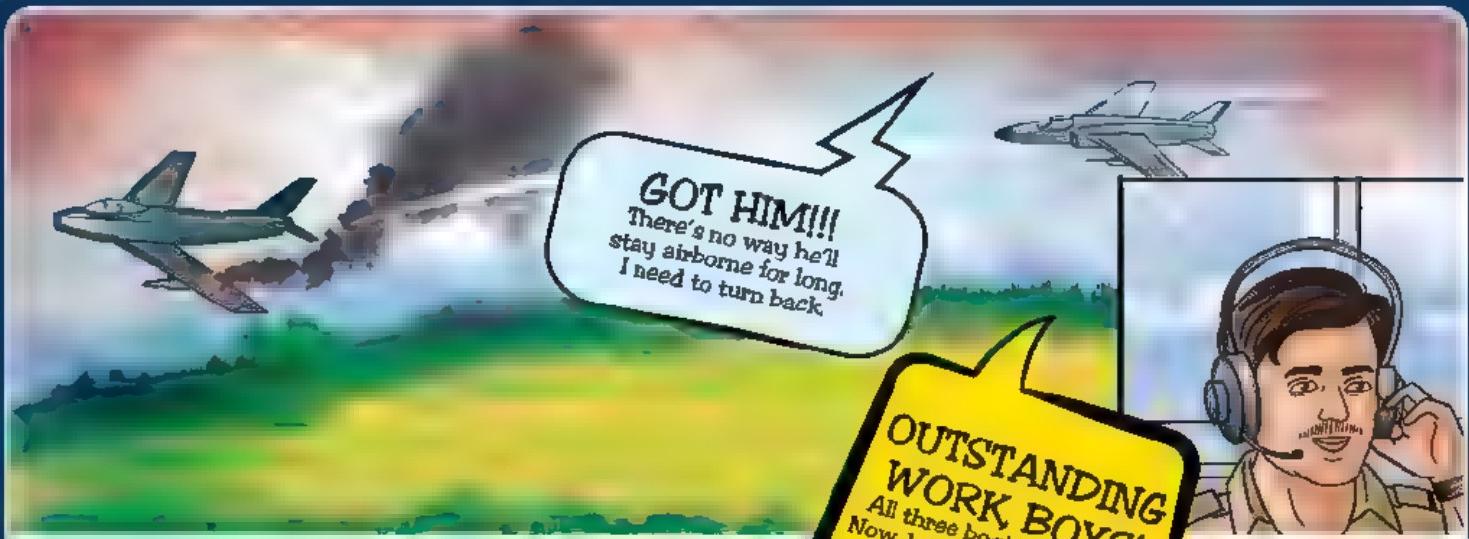


Both enemy pilots ejected from their Sabres, believing they had escaped to safety. Little did they know, their ordeal was far from over. As they descended, Indian Army soldiers on the ground awaited their arrival, swiftly capturing them as Prisoners of War.



Meanwhile, Massey and Soares were behind the last Sabre

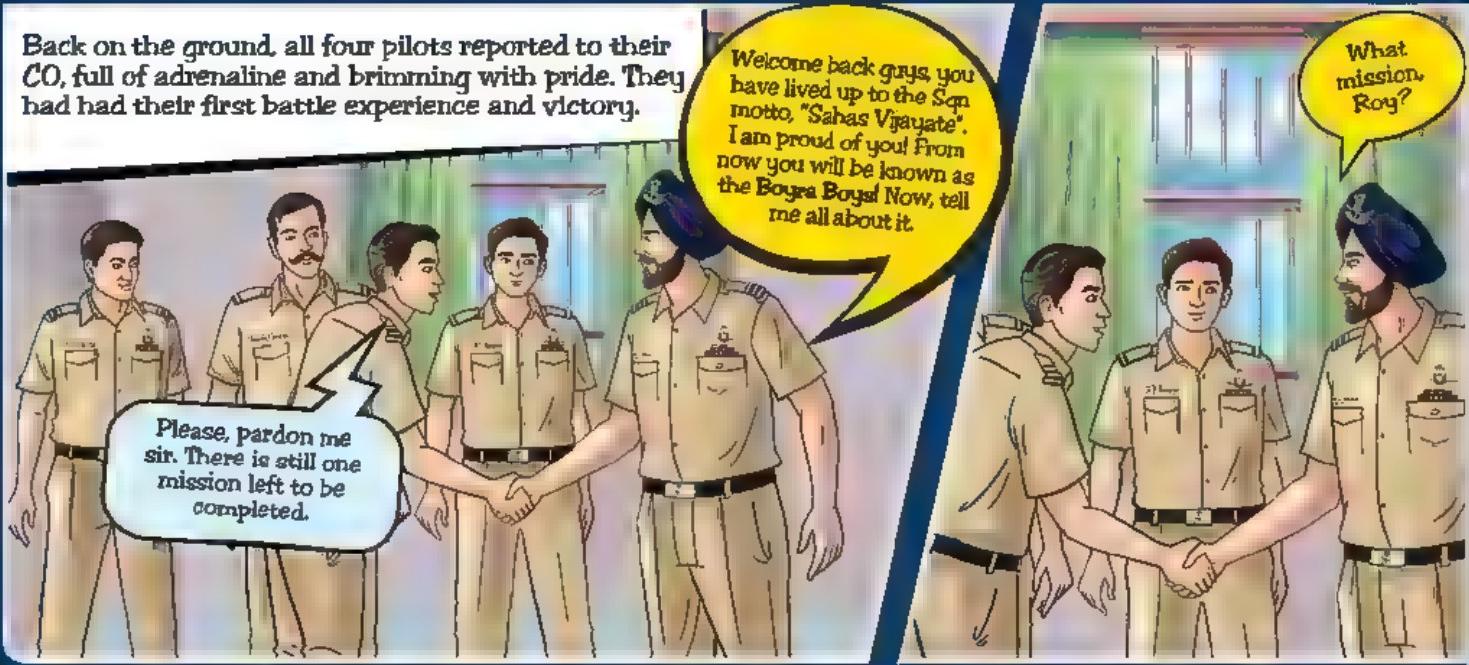


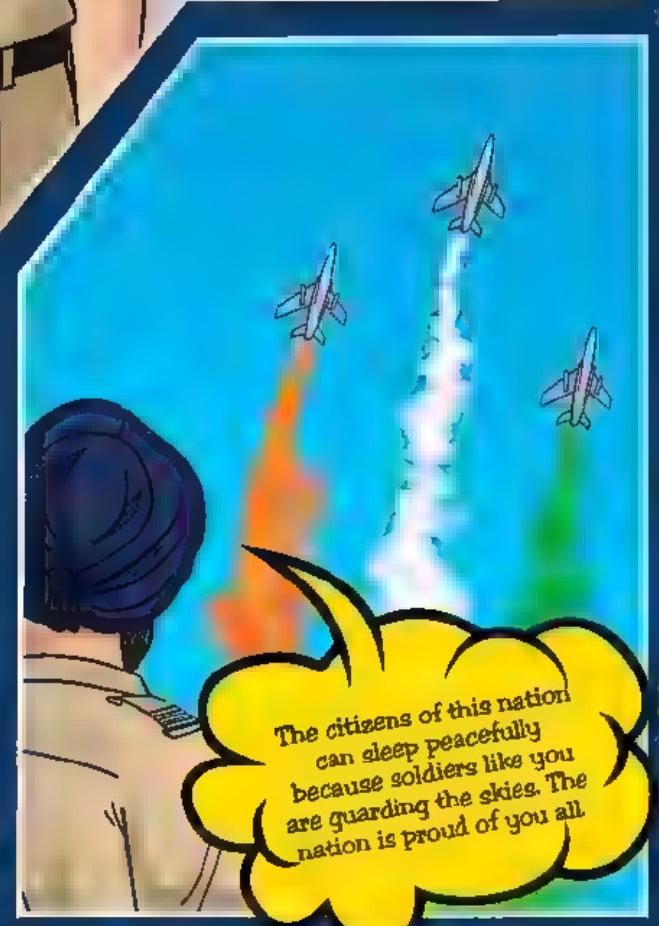
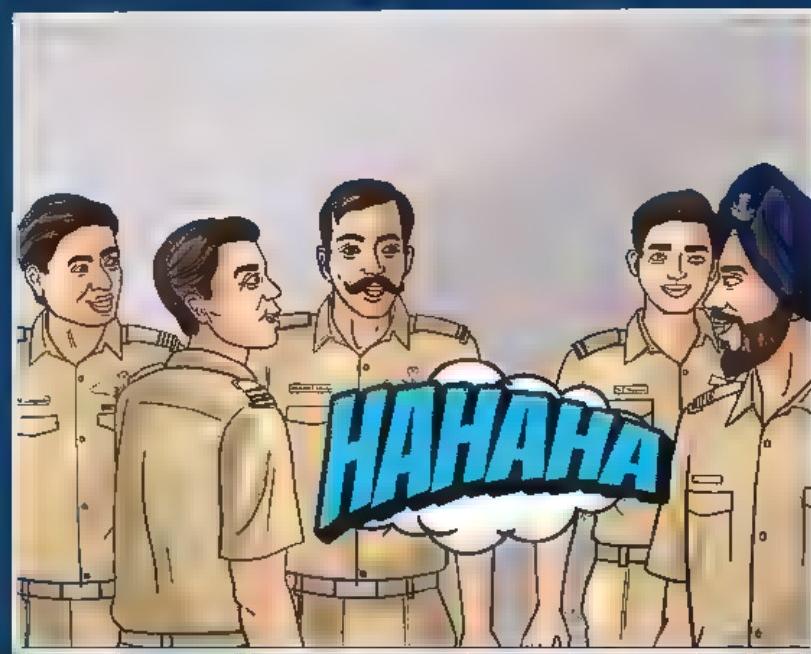


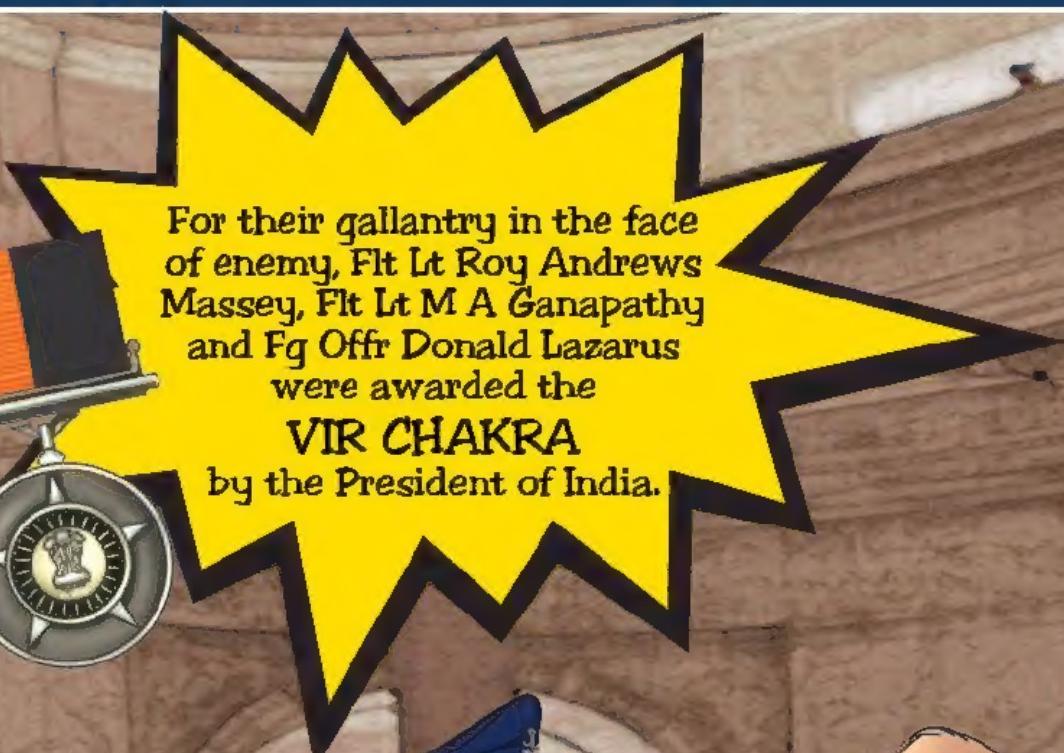
All four pilots landed safely, their mission a resounding success. They had triumphed over Boura with unmatched skill and valour.



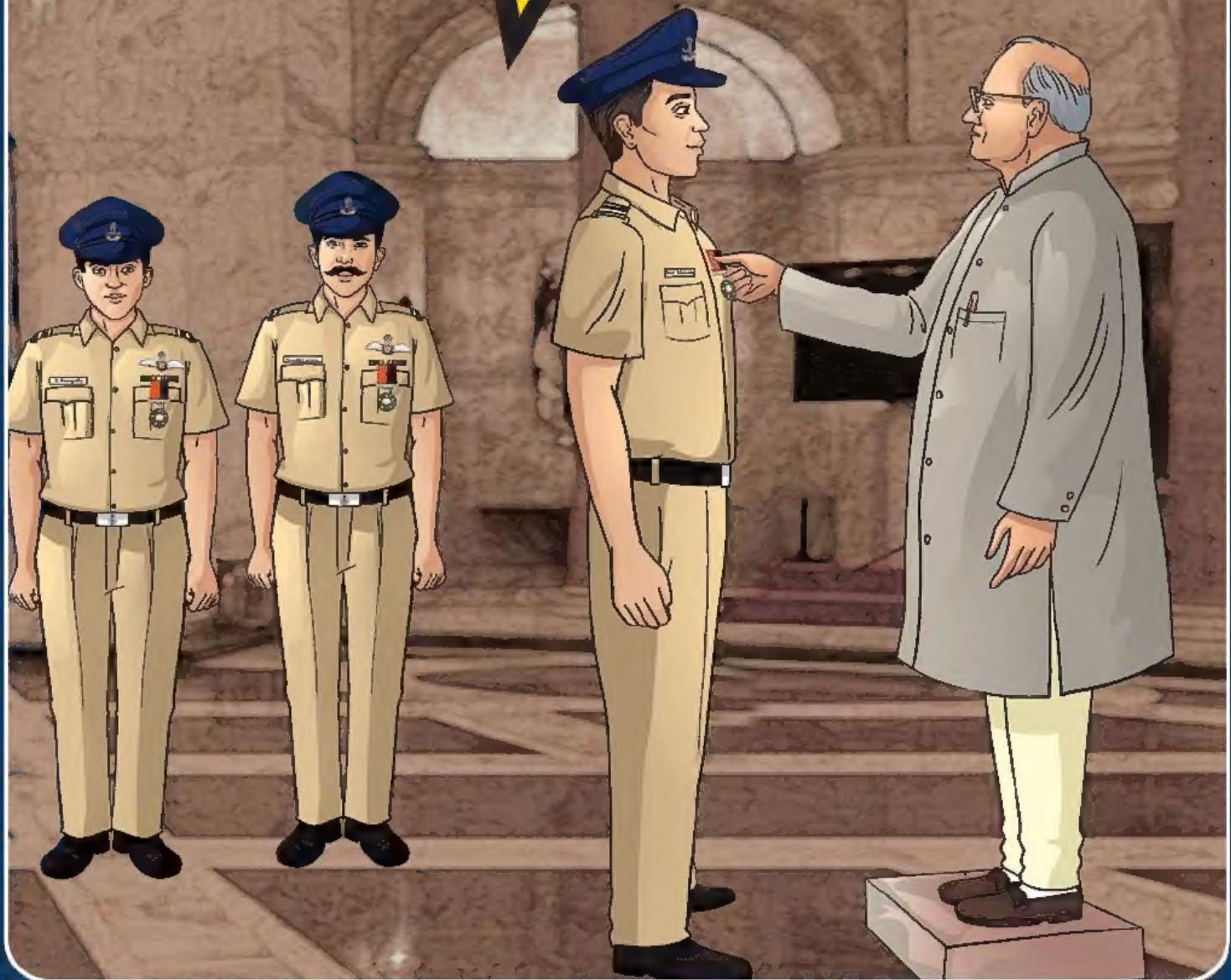
Back on the ground, all four pilots reported to their CO, full of adrenaline and brimming with pride. They had had their first battle experience and victory.







For their gallantry in the face  
of enemy, Flt Lt Roy Andrews  
Massey, Flt Lt M A Ganapathy  
and Fg Offr Donald Lazarus  
were awarded the  
**VIR CHAKRA**  
by the President of India.



# BRANCHES IN INDIAN AIR FORCE

## JOIN THE INDIAN AIR FORCE: A WAY OF LIFE DEDICATED TO THE SERVICE OF THE NATION AND LIFETIME OF ADVENTURE!

Depending on one's qualifications, the Indian Air Force (IAF) offers exciting opportunities for bright young men and women to serve the nation and defend the skies. One can join IAF in following branches:

### FLYING BRANCH

As a Flying Branch officer, one can serve the nation by engaging the enemy in air combat, para-dropping troops or supplies at forward posts or carrying out rescue missions during natural calamities. As a fighter pilot, one can fly advanced fighter aircraft like Tejas, Rafale, Su-30 MKI, Mirage-2000, Jaguar and the MiG-29 UPG. Whereas, a transport pilot gets an opportunity to fly the best of heavy and medium lift aircraft like C-130 (Hercules), C-17 Globemaster, IL-76, IL-78, C-295, An-32, etc. As a helicopter pilot one gets to fly Apache, Chinook, ALH, Dhruv, Rudra, Mi-17, Mi-35, Prahari, etc.

### GROUND DUTY (TECHNICAL) BRANCHES

**Aeronautical Engineer (Mechanical)** officers specifically deal with aircraft structure and propulsion, and explosive technology and regulation.

**Aeronautical Engineer (Electronics)** officers specifically deal with Airfield Navigation and Modern Airfield Infrastructure, Radar, Microwave Technology and Communication Engineering, and Advanced Network Centric Warfare.

### GROUND DUTY (NON-TECHNICAL) BRANCHES

**Weapon Systems Branch** officers specialise in execution of operational tasks of units equipped with weapon systems like SAMs, SAGWs, Surface to Surface Missiles and Remotely Piloted Combat Aircraft. Officers of this branch will also be Weapon System Operators/Combat System Operators in multi-crew aircraft.

**Administration Branch** officers are responsible for the efficient management of both human and material resources. Some officers of the Administration Branch are selected and trained to carry out Air Traffic Controller & Fighter Controller duties.

**Logistics Branch** officers are responsible for materiel management of all IAF's resources. They undertake

activities pertaining to forecasting, provisioning, and procurement of various equipment and inventory management.

**Accounts Branch** officers are responsible for budgeting and efficient management of funds. They function as advisors on all financial matters and also act as internal auditors.

**Education Branch** officers work towards improvement of educational standards of IAF personnel and their dependents.

**Meteorology Branch** officers render professional advice on all aspects related to weather that are essential for conduct of air operations.

# The Heroes in Focus - The Boyra Boys



Wing Commander B.S. Sikand



The Indian Pilots Roy Massey, MA Ganapathy and Don Lazarus became heroes overnight.



M A Ganapathy



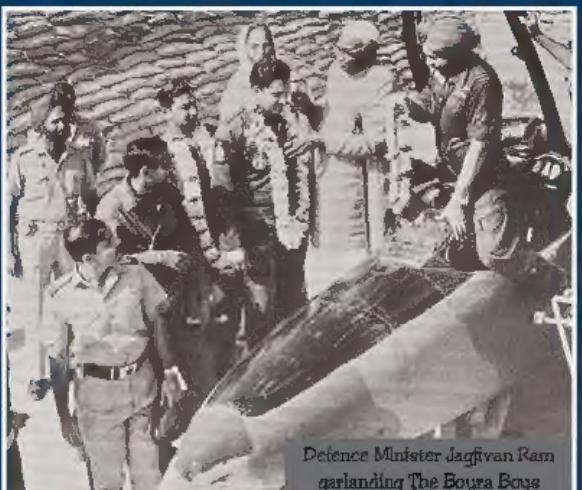
S F Soares



Donald Lazarus



The Boyra boys. (From L-R) Flight Lieutenant Roy Andrew 'Mouse' Massey, Flying Officer KB Bagchi (Fighter Controller), Flying Officer Donald 'Don' Lazarus, Flying Officer SF 'Su' Soares, Flight Lieutenant MA 'Gun' Ganapathy



Defence Minister Jagjivan Ram garlanding The Boyra Boys

## Find Your Calling

There comes a point in our lives, when we all start thinking of our career plans. Will I have a good future? Will I be able to achieve my dreams in the domain I am thinking about? The answer to all these questions is very simple. Ask yourself, what's your calling?

'Find your Calling' is a story of Rahul who is struggling hard with loss of his father who was an Air Force Officer. He often thinks like any teenage boy: "If Dad would have been here, I would not have to worry about it". Today, when he needs his father the most to help him with his career plans, Rahul stumbled upon a treasured book in his father's library—a biography of the legendary Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh DFC.

Arjan Singh began his career after receiving training at the Royal Air Force (RAF) College Cranwell, and soon got battle hardened in the operations against the Pathans in the North-Western Province. During the World War II he participated in operations against the Japanese in the Burma campaign and turned the tides in the 1965 war against Pakistani troops.

As Rahul delves into Arjan Singh's transformative story of courage, he ignites his own passion and finds his calling. The story shows, how the legacy of one remarkable individual, can illuminate the future for another.

## The Boyra Boys

The Indian Air Force soars as the symbol of bravery and strength, fiercely protecting India's skies with unmatched precision and dedication. One such story of valour is 'The Battle of Boyra', where three Indian Air Force pilots became the 'Sabre Slayers' and were awarded the Vir Chakra.

Amidst escalating tensions and the 1971 genocide in East Pakistan (now, Bangladesh), Bengali nationalists formed the "Mukti Bahini" guerrilla army. With nearly 10 million Bangladeshi refugees coming in, India increased its involvement and stationed troops near the border.

The Boyra salient, including Garibpur, was a critical junction with a key highway to Jessore. Securing this area was crucial for both the nations.

On 21 November 1971, the Indian Army and Mukti Bahini repelled Pakistani troops at Garibpur. Unable to break through, the Pakistani army called for air support. On 22 November 1971, the skies thundered as the Pakistani Air Force launched several Sabre Mk 6 fighter aircraft against Indian troops. In response, the Indian Air Force deployed ace pilots from No. 22 Squadron 'Swifts' equipped with the Folland Gnat aircraft. What followed was the epic aerial battle, now called the Battle of Boyra, in which the young Indian Air Force pilots shot down two Pakistani Sabres.



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